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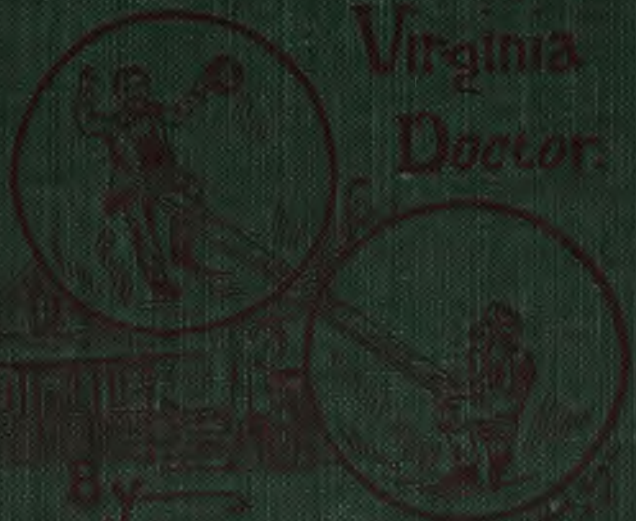
Ups And Downs of a Virginia Doctor.



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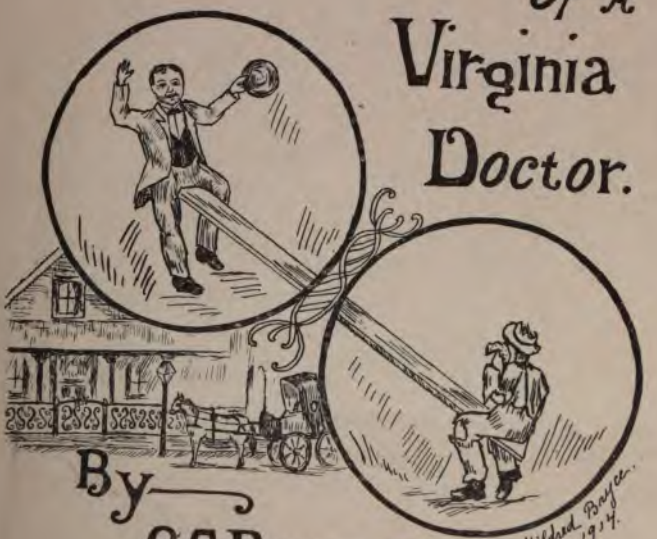

By C.A. Bryce, M.D.

"UPS AND DOWNS"

OF A

VIRGINIA DOCTOR.

BY HIS LIFELONG AND PERSONAL FRIEND

CLARENCE A. BRYCE, M. D.

1904:
ASHLAND PRINTING COMPANY,
ASHLAND, VA.

INTRODUCTORY.

Having known the subject of this sketch from the first moment of his existence and having been most intimately associated and connected with him from his childhood until the present time, we have undertaken the task of giving to the reader a short biographical sketch of our friend whose career from the cradle of impecuniosity to the dawn of professional plethora may be likened to the ever changing views in the kaleidoscope or the fitful sunshine and shadow of the April day.

I have therefore promised myself to commit some of his history to a more permanent receptacle than my treacherous memory. There are other reasons that impel me to write this little book; and I know of no more cogent one than the fact that I will be telling some private matters that his family and friends should know, especially since they have been told by his enemies considerably to his disadvantage and have never been noticed by my friend who takes the peculiar ground that "all liars will be punished in the other country!"

We trust therefore that the family and immediate friends of the subject of our sketch will be gratified at the personal history we will introduce, while the public and the profession especially for whose ad-

B91
1904

vancement he has labored most faithfully for a long time, will find many a hearty laugh; sometimes the reader may brush away a mote or two from his eye while reading the shadowy pages—and finally it is to be hoped that many poor young men may be cheered and encouraged to meet trials, opposition and poverty with the iron will that our lifelong friend met them, and triumph over all obstacles at last.

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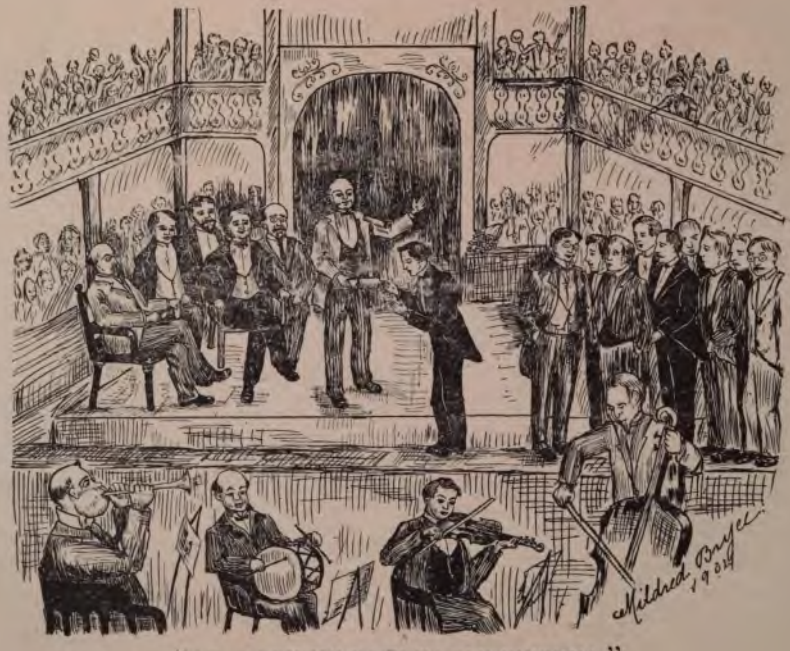
TO MY MEDICAL BRETHREN,
THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN,
GOD BLESS THEM.
WE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATE THIS LITTLE VOLUME.



"OH CARRY ME BACK TO OLD VIRGINIA."

SOME OF THE

UPS AND DOWNS

OF A

VIRGINIA DOCTOR.

GRADUATION.

THE band played "The Mocking Bird," the audience rustled itself, old Dr. Jeromes came out to the footlights and, with a few squeaky words of wisdom and kindness, handed out a sheepskin to each of the ten youngsters who were the observed of all observers, declaring that after laborious studies and much privation we had been declared entitled to the degree of M. D. The audience thought it was all over, and a red headed girl

in the gallery nailed me on the back of the head with the largest bouquet I ever saw or felt. I stooped and picked it up and, after the manner of my polished professors, I looked amiably up to the supposed donor and smiled serenely and bowed lowly, when there came back in a perfect coffee-mill voice heard by everyone in the large assemblage:
"It isn't for you sir—read the card before you bow again."

I could have gone through the floor, but, by George, our ups and downs come together sometimes.

Almost before the shout could go up from the vast audience, my personal friend, the red faced Dutchman, who led the band and who had swallowed many a nickle's worth of beer for me when I could ill afford to spare the cash, now repaid me fully for all of my kindness. His stolid features broke into a lively appreciation of the state of affairs, and sticking his horn to his mouth and swelling his enormous jaws to triple expansion, there rolled from every piece on that stage with all the fervor of a German band, "The Girl I Left Behind Me." There was no stopping him. In vain did the master of ceremonies waive him down, the glorious strains

poured forth until, in sheer desperation, everybody was seated. When the piece was ended a facetious young professor arose and started to make a brief allusion to "misapplied floral offerings," and the giggle started again, only to be immediately suppressed as well as to suppress the speaker with another impromptu serenade of "Oh Carry Me Back to Old Virginia," and this time my friend let them know that nothing on earth can beat a brass band.

I graduated in a homespun coat, and without flowers, but I held the balance of power that night, and to this day honor the memory of my dear and honest friend who blew the cornet on that occasion and now sleeps in beautiful Hollywood. And besides my old German friend of the band, so many others of that company on that commencement night have passed away, that I feel lonely now when I look around and find them, all, all gone. Of the faculty of the college present that night, but few are now in the land of the living. The good old Dean is gone, the gentlemanly young professor of chemistry gone too, the talented anatomist, the jolly obstetrician, the scholarly and polished Manson, and the matter-of-fact gynaecologist are all gone over to the resting place. Of the vast audience we know

not whether the red headed girl still survives—it is possible that her cheek and want of finer sensibilities have saved her nervous system many a rude shock and she still may be a sojourner in the land somewhere, though it is possible her features may have changed slightly by this time. Wherever she is, she has my profound sympathy.

But we can speak more certainly of the whereabouts of one member of that audience. The nervous, little, oldish woman who sat away back in the crowd in her faded clothes of better days, who hastily wiped away a few tears of joy when she saw me receive my diploma, has also passed to her reward. Yes, God bless your memory, my dear *mother*, for while you only could give me the counsel of a wise, virtuous and Christian woman with a shining example of your faith in the outcome of a correct life, this heritage proved to me more valuable and lasting in after life than the money help so liberally given many of my acquaintances in the unequal race for life which we then commenced, and enabled me to supply some of them in later years with food and raiment when the see-saw of fate had carried them down and tilted my end upwards.

Reader, if you are a medical student, do not for-

get to study your mother's text-book occasionally, if you are a young practitioner, you can even to a greater degree profit by her teachings. Take her for an example, let your life be moral and virtuous, let your language be chaste and pure; be kind and true and faithful to your fellow man and to your Maker, and you are a success. The blustering, coarse, vulgar student or physician is a failure, an abortion—a disgrace to his mother and an excrescence on the body of the profession.

But it is too dry to be a moralizer, I will tell you of sights and incidents over the road I have traveled.

The next morning, realizing that I was actually a a doctor, and that it was imperatively necessary for me to leave the city at once in consequence of the depleted condition of my finances and the unwillingness of my third-rate boarding house mistress to retain me longer under her garret roof, or furnish me the necessary soup and codfish to keep me alive and colicked, without the cash down, (I would have aspired to a city practice then, but the above conditions precluded the idea) I gathered my diploma, Neill and Smith's Compend and my dissecting case under my arm and walked out of the city on the Brooke road until I was well in the country, where, by ap-

pointment with my old neighborhood market man, I took passage for my rural home at reduced rates. He said he charged fifty cents for bringing a calf to the city, but return load was half price, and he actually hauled me home for a quarter! I have been reduced to some pretty close quarters in my life, but this was the first and only time that I have ever been placed on an actual equality with a calf. I have heard of many unpleasant things being said about me, by narrow minded medical pigmies and their tooters. I have been accused of being ambitious, unprincipled, shrewd and belligerent, but I have never yet heard myself called a fool or a calf, though I must admit that in my earlier professional life while I came not among my constituency riding upon an ass, I was hauled as a calf!

COMMENCING PRACTICE.

SOME of the most illustrious members of the profession have been country doctors, and not wishing to prove an exception to the rule, I concluded, from reasons briefly shadowed in my former chapter, that it would be better for me to locate in the rural districts at first. I believed then, as I do now, that printer's ink is a great lever, and relying upon that knowledge I had five hundred cards struck off announcing that C. A. Belshazzer, M. D., had located near Good-for-all, and that he made Surgery, Uterine and Operative, a specialty.

Of course, every youngster graduates as a Surgeon and Specialist and has particular merit in his specialty, which, unfortunately for a number of years, consists in waiting for patronage that comes usually when the fellow has found out how to live without, or has hung, "pizened" or shot himself because he could not live on hope deferred any longer. I have

met them in all stages—some turned to gamblers, some to horse traders, a few preached the gospel, I am sorry to have to say, for bread and meat apparently; while I knew one good fellow who turned himself into a horse doctor and made money. Nevertheless, they all were graduates and full fledged M. D's.

Well, I nailed up my cards on the meeting houses, stores, mills and blacksmith shops, and awaited results. I thought that I was going to have a walk over. My only competitors in the immediate neighborhood were three medical men whom I considered, about the time of my graduation, as men so far *behind the times* as to be not in the way of a man fresh from college with latest inventions, sleek saddlebags and new remedies.

It is wonderful how much a young doctor has to learn after he leaves college, and how misanthropic he becomes when he finds out that when it comes to trusting one's self, where life is involved, to the novice, but few are willing to take him. My nearest neighbor, for example, would ride by me and go three miles further for old Dr. Love Whiskey to see his family rather than try young Sober Sides.

However, I burnt him up one day for it and cured

him for all time. The story is so good I must tell it: This fellow was a shallow pated farmer who made a fair, good living and now and then had a dollar or two ahead. In other words he was desirable as a patient. He had publicly said that he "wouldn't trust no young doctor, particularly a youngster he had knowed all his life, and that he had rather have old Love-Whiskey drunk than C. A. Belshazzer sober." I could not help myself nor change his opinion, but I made a note of it in my mind in red ink and kept quiet.

One hot day in August, I was returning from a visit to a poor squatter who lived a mile or two below the old doctor of whom I have spoken, and looking ahead of me I saw a man riding down the road at a terrible pace. His horse was a large, raw boned animal and galloped with a peculiar degree of hardness, so that the rider was lifted almost out of the McClellan saddle as he went up, and was jammed back when he came down. Added to this the animal was given to making that peculiar growling or churning noise that is sometimes heard when trotting. As this thundering Pegasus approached, with its rider's arms flopping and his pants worked high up over his knees, I recognized my quondam

friend who had such an appreciation of the old and bibulous doctor. He began reining in as he approached me and in a most deferential manner said:

"Doctor, my child has the cholerer infanter and I am going for Dr. Hawthorn, but if he ain't in, will you ride slow so I can take you along?"

I knew I had him, for I had just passed the country store and noticed old Soakum trying to mount his horse hind part before, because some fun loving fellow, possibly a friend of mine, had turned the saddle with the front end toward the animal's tail.

It was a sad sight, though ludicrous, to see this venerable disciple of Aesculapius trying to adapt himself to the changed conditions that confronted him. I knew therefore that he was in no shape to grapple with "cholerer infanter" as speedily as my excited neighbor would wish. So like the frog that went a courting "he did ride," but without old Drinkum by his side, and soon overtook me and requested me to move along and not spare my horse.

By this time I had two red lines down on my mental tablet against him, the last of which referred to the fact of taking me up as a convenience when he could do no better. I told him I had no desire

OLD SOAKUM. [Pgs. 10-11]

to visit his family at all, and certainly no intention of running my horse three miles when I was picked up as an emergency by people who had expressed themselves so strongly against me.

He was in a terrible stew, he knew I had him correctly reported and that the next nearest physician was ten miles off.

"Well," said he, "what will you charge me to run your horse to my house and do your best for my child?"

"Not less than twenty-five dollars for the single visit," said I.

He undertook to parley with me for a minute or two, but the conference speedily ended by reason of the rapid approach of another brother, who told him he believed Billy was dying, and for goodness sake to hurry up with the doctor. This settled it and he agreed to pay me my price.

I had a wiry, good mettled little horse that hardly got warmed up in three or four miles, and pressing my heels into his flanks he sprang off, and the two brothers heaved and plunged at a terrible pace with their plough horses to keep in call of me. In many respects the ride was unique and amusing to me, and to my followers it was a trying one, for it either

meant the death of the child, or a parting with the cash, or possibly both.

Most races of this kind finally end, and in this case I found a pretty sick child to which I gave a half grain of calomel on a spoonful of crushed ice every half hour, a warm bath, and a mint poultice over its stomach, and rested my conscience. While I was working on the baby the father was working on his horse for the "thumps" into which he had ridden him on this John Gilpin race. So as the baby got better and the horse got worse, my spirits went up.

I enjoyed the whole thing highly and actually wished from the bottom of my heart that the old horse would die and let the fellow know what it cost to buck against a young doctor. However, it was a regular field day for me; by night the child had reacted nicely and was out of immediate danger. Unfortunately, the old horse began to revive too, and after all, the sorrows and anxieties of the day among the Blanks came to an end with my departure.

The fellow didn't have the ready cash as I left, as I knew when I went, so I left him with an admonition to let the full amount be forthcoming the next

week. He begged me to see if I could not reduce it a little, but I was inflexible, and told him he had to pay what we had agreed upon. He wished me to continue in the case and visit the child in the morning, but being a beginner and a decided winner thus far in the case I did not care to risk my laurels, for though young, I had seen before that, one or two cases in which the "cholerer" was squelched but the "infanter" passed away more remotely despite the most approved treatment. I therefore told him with much dignity that I did not care to take practice from his *family physician* and advised him to call him to see the child the next day.

"Well," said he warming up a little, "Ef you are so etiketical with the perfession, it seems to me you orter turn this visit over to Dr. Hawthorn also."

This was getting close to me, and I felt it for the moment, but calling him up as if I intended whispering a secret I said:

"Blanks, when a physician tries to ride his horse tail foremost, he forfeits ethical consideration for *that day*."

He wilted right there, for he had actually tried to straighten old Drinkum for the ride, before giving him up. He grinned a fool grin and said:

"Good-night Doc."

This fellow paid his bill, employed me regularly afterwards and never spoke disrespectfully of *any physician* after that.

THE MALARIAL FESTIVAL.

IN the section of country in which I practised in the fall of 1871 and spring of 1872, the whole length of South Anna county was chosen by the King of Malaria for the holding of his semi-centennial festival, and for a period of eight or ten months, there was not a family in twenty miles that did not tremble and shake in the presence of his august majesty.

It is a fact that I paid five dollars per ounce for sulphate of quinine and used three or four ounces per week in this "festival," while every store keeper, peddler and market man handled the precious stuff and retailed it at from 1½ to 2 cents per grain, and ready buyers were found for all that was offered.

The whole section in which I marauded had one mighty ague, which shook little and big, old and young, black and white, the very few rich, and the mighty throng of poor, until they wobbled when

they walked and sweated when they came to a stand-still.

Late in the fall, when nature painted the foliage in rich colors, she did not forget this quaking lot of humanity, but generously lemon-tinted the last one of them, and left deep lines in their faces, marking the losses of energy and adipose. I have never known anything to compare to this endemic. There were all forms of chill and fever; quotidians, tertians, quartans, and the mighty "Congesters."

I had intermittents, remittents, relapsers and bastards. If a fellow dared to have any independent sickness, malaria would jump on him and dress him up in his regalia in spite of all protestations, so that the poor victim would have a good day (or rather not so terrible) and a bad day. He would shake and sweat one day and rest the next. I cannot refrain from telling the following story as characteristic of this fact and the times, as well as of the simple country folk among whom I plied my calling and "won my spurs."

Living not far from my "office" was Jim Hodges, a good natured bachelor, about thirty, who lived with his mother and took good care of the old lady. Jim was tall, lank, gawky, and thoroughly good

JIM HODGES. [Pgs. 16 17]

natured. He seldom grumbled, and took everything as it came, as a matter of fact. He got his dose of malaria and shook, and shrunk and turned "yaller," but he stood it all and used his own remedies of poplar bark tea, fodder tea, spider webs, hard cider with rusty nails in it; and when he got mad he took a rousing dose of Epsom Salts and swore he would "work the darn pizen out of him or bust." He didn't bust nor exactly get rid of his pizen, as I learned upon inviting him to go with me to a fish fry.

"When will that be Doc?" said he, in a subdued and hopeless tone.

"On the 25th," said I.

"That is a Friday, ain't it?"

"Yes, next Friday."

"Onpossibul Doc, sorry I can't go."

"Well, you should go; it will help you; there will be music, dancing, and liquor," said I, "and while you are not very muscular, just now, and might not succeed in keeping up with your partner, the music and liquor would doubtless help you."

"Tain't no use to hold out inducements, I can't go if you had forty brass bands and four bar'ls of whiskey," said Jim.

"Well what on earth is the reason?" queried I.

"Wal ef you must know you mout as well have it straight: You see when I took that salts it left me with the disunterry and I has a fair day and a bad day, in place of them tarnul chills, and," (counting on his fingers) "Friday is an onsafe day for me to be in company."

Poor fellow, his face had all the hopelessness of the condemned criminal, and I did what no medical man should ever do except under very rare circumstances—volunteered advice and medicine free.

He accepted; I eased his conscience and liver with a little hydrarg. mass. (sensible people call it blue mass) and tightened him with a little quinine and opium; and he went to that fish fry with courage in his eye, a good grip below his waistband, and courted his wife on sight, married before Christmas and named his first boy after me!

I did not charge poor Jim Hodges for that advice, but he paid me back well out of other people's pockets, for he had a big mouth and many friends, all of whom knew the nature of his ailment, and that he was now well under my skillful treatment.

The outlook was truly encouraging for me, but at first very few called upon me for it was considered

unwise to employ a doctor for chills and fever, as they called everything malarious; and at first I was very much afraid that household practice would succeed, but, as much of this practice depleted the victims and made them less and less hopeful, my spirits ascended correspondingly.

But when it came to calling doctors the older fellows around me got the favors, and still I waited my turn with some feelings of assurance that I would get there after awhile.

Fortunately I had one or two standbys, a few very poor families who never had anything to do but get sick, and who could manage to call me in at any time when business got slack, or who could furnish me an excuse for calling in at any time to see after their complaints. When a physician has a good practice this is not the best class of trade, but to the young physician who must appear to have some patients they are desirable indeed. I could count on three of these families at appropriate distances.

Across the river about two miles from me, and right on the main road, lived Patterson Hilo, the head of one of these families. He was an earnest believer in my ability to cure anything at any time and under all conditions, from fits to smallpox,

His work was seldom of such importance as to prevent him from coming after me for the most trivial ailment with either of his daughters or the "old ooman," as he called his cadaverous looking wife, who wore a red scarf wrapped around her head, and smoked a husk pipe in addition, for the "newraligy."

His two daughters were mere children, being about twelve and fourteen respectively, but I solemnly declare that these three people, until I got into practice, took more medicine and managed to have more need for a physician than any ten families I have ever since encountered. Poor souls, they seemed to realize that they could not pay me in any other way than by keeping me on the run, and heaven knows they paid me with interest!

These poor souls have feelings and ofttimes suffer from other conditions than actual disease. Many long years after these people had faded from my memory, and after I had achieved what the world calls success in a city practice, one afternoon my bell was rung and the servant with a snicker said:

"One mighty funny looking country woman wants to see you."

A young country woman of twenty-five or twenty-six years entered my private consulting room and

shook hands with me so warmly that I was puzzled to recognize her. She was very much excited and after much fumbling in her handsatchel, finally found a dingy letter and handed it to me. The letter was very hard to read, but I finally managed to make it out as follows:

"dear Docktur B.

You has proberly furgotting us all sence you done got to be sech a big city docktur, but I hears you is got the same kine hart, and noes you never forgits yo frens. The barer of this is Sally, the same little Sally what you saved from death nigh 18 years ago, an O Lord doctur ef she had er dide it would of bin better. Poor child she has bin fuled by a low dog of a fellow who promist to marry her and now as she is in this fix he has lef from about here. Docktur this is turble, do something fur poor Sally and save her and us frum eternal disgrace. Ef the chile had bin bad I wud not ask you to help her out but she trusted him. Docktur for the Lords sake dont turn a deaf ear.

Yours Rachail Hilo."

I read this appeal over three or four times before saying anything to this poor deluded and unfortunate creature. When I told her that I remembered her

and spoke kindly to her, she wept as if her heart would break. I told her that I could not do one wrong to rectify another, and urged her to go off and let matters take their course. She begged in vain for something to save her from disgrace. I could not help her and it pained me sorely to tell her so, as she was poor, ignorant and helpless.

Had she been a wealthy woman, and a mover in aristocratic and "swell" circles, she possibly could have gotten along without much trouble, but as it was, she was found dead in a squalid hut in a neighboring county, two months after she left my office. She simply pined away and died from grief and the utter absence of hope on this earth.

Going back to Patterson Hilo, however, I was in to see his wife one day, during this great visitation of malaria, when I heard a horseman rapidly approaching down the road. Suddenly he stopped opposite Hilo's cabin and inquired if Dr. Belshazzer was there. Hilo replied that I was "thar" to see his wife, but would soon be through. The man asked him to please hurry me out as fast as possible as a serious case awaited me above, about a mile. I came forth at once and recognized a very substantial citizen who asked me to go at once to see his

nephew who was unconscious and supposed to be dying.

This gentleman was another of my *friends* who had spoken very contemptuously of the services of young doctors, but at this time I found him very deferential, and he called me "doctor" with a decided emphasis and a dwell on the r that was pleasing to a novice. This change of demeanor was partially explained by Hilo who had untied my horse and as he handed me the bridle, said in an undertone:

"Doc, you air got him, he thinks his boy have got a congestious chill."

This was a valuable pointer for me, for it gave me time to ruminate on the line of treatment, and to anticipate the difficulties likely to confront me on arrival at the scene of action.

Nothing should be a surprise to a medical man, and a doctor should never appear disconcerted at anything. So these pointers in advance are worth much to an appreciative young or old doctor.

Don't start out by snubbing and ignoring servants, old women and nurses; they are worth a man's reputation sometimes, and when friendly, will herald your praises, and hide your mistakes far better than

the majority of people better taught in ethical schools, and from whom we have a right to expect support and protection when assailed.

I found a young man on a cot surrounded by three or four men and all of the old and middle aged women of the immediate neighborhood, and as he could neither speak nor swallow, they had abandoned all treatment and awaited a physician.

I had never seen a patient with a congestive chill, but the case was plain. The young man was as cold as a wedge, covered with a clammy perspiration, totally unconscious, and with a fixed, glazy stare out of his motionless eyes. Respiration slow and sighing. I have never forgotten this picture, nor have I ever seen a more typical case since.

The best thing in such cases for the embarrassed physician is to put all onlookers and criticisers to work. I at once ordered hot water, blankets, mustard plasters, frictions, hot bricks and everything else hot that I could think of, and then sat a moment by the poor fellow to think a little myself!

I soon got down to business, however, and got sixty grains of quinine and a drachm of oil of black pepper into him, as only a doctor could get this in a patient who *could not swallow;* then with the

most powerful heart stimulants and circulation drivers, I soon got his color to gradually come back, and after two hours hard work, with nearly all the skin blistered and rubbed off him, he yawned, his eyes opened and he asked: "what is the matter?"

The fear of "Congestious chills" and my fame as a curer of them gave me quite a run and for the balance of the season I had all I could do, so that if a big practice among the country people was an evidence of professional success, I was decidedly up in the scale.

A VISITOR FROM THE OTHER WORLD.

MOST sensible men do foolish things at times, and I plead guilty to having been a party to a very foolish contract in these earlier years of rustic practice along the borders of Taylor's Creek in the good old county of South Anna.

I had been through the revelations of the dissecting room, and had tricks played upon me, in which the dead bodies would mysteriously raise a warning and threatening hand at me as I worked alone in the dead house in the "wee sma hours."

In the hospital I had seen the awful and sudden taking off of my fellow men until I felt that nothing could unnerve me. But what I subsequently experienced was enough to make me careful to not go out of my way to hunt up trouble ever thereafter.

I had a patient, a colored woman, dying of consumption, who lived about a quarter of a mile from the main county road in a little clearing in the

THE HOME OF PETER ADAMS. [Pg. 27]

pines. The county road ran through a dense forest for a mile or two with no habitation in sight or call, and about midway of this forest, the little détour to this poor patient's house or hut struck off and within an equal distance beyond tapped the elbowing road again.

This little path was just the same kind of road that thousands of country doctors know all about, along which the trusty horse moves with cautious speed at a pace which allows the bronzed son of Aesculapius to play a pantomime in catching and warding off bushes and twigs, ducking for the overreaching limbs and "scrinching" his legs into the smallest space to keep kneecaps and shins from barking the friendly trees.

Yes, brethren, we've all been there, and horse and rider have never broken a long trot for miles under such conditions until we had reached the suffering one who had asked again and again, "do you see the doctor coming?"

At last the urchin rushes in with:

"Here come Doc. Carver on old Snowflake lek a house afire!"

"Thank God!" exclaims the poor patient, "I feel better now;" and he was better.

They said this about old doctor Carver and his snow-white horse when I was a boy; they said it about me on my faithful and pretty sorrel, (poor fellow, gone to his rest); they have said it about you, my good brother, and they will say it for those coming on; and woe be it to the profession when commercialism and trickery will rob it of the respect and love of the community in hut or palace!

Shades of Paracelsus! how we do digress; I started to tell a tale about Peter Adams' wife, a colored woman dying of consumption; I will get right down to business now and tell it straight.

It was in the month of March and as the days grew longer, this poor creature's breath became shorter, her appetite enormous and she weaker every day. Poor Peter supplied her with everything in his reach to tempt her appetite and improve her strength. Her entire dietary consisted of corn-bread, hog meat, and buttermilk.

When I urged him to vary her diet and try to improve it, he did so by giving her less hog meat and more buttermilk, and *vice versa*.

Peter did his best, but the poor woman could no more take on adipose from such a diet than the lean porker, in the stye in the rear of his hut, could from

the slops from such an abundant table; so before the winds of March ceased to blow, Peter's wife and pig had both given up the ghost, non-assimilation being, in both instances, a prominent factor in the taking off.

But before her demise, the poor creature expressed much gratitutde for my efforts to ease her pain and prolong her life, and regretted that there was no way in which I could possibly hope to receive any compensation for my services.

I told her that she was welcome to all I had done for her, and I would make one request of her, if she would agree to it, and it could not possibly do any harm if nothing ever came of it.

It was that, after her death, she would return to earth and unmistakably satisfy me that it was possible for a spirit to return to earth.

To my surprise, she received it very reasonably and became a willing party to the contract, agreeing to reveal herself to me within six months after her death if such a thing were possible.

Soon after her demise, I kept a sharp eye open for revelations, especially when passing along that neighborhood after dark, but seeing nothing I soon forgot all about the matter.

One very rainy day, in the early fall, I was sent for to see the wife of a medical man, living a mile or two above the point of which I have written.

This gentleman, while just in the prime of life, and a well educated and competent physician, seemed to have become soured with the profession, and did not follow it. He seemed to have a decided preference for cultivating the little farm upon which he resided, and worked his land and ploughed his fields as any other farm hand would.

He was a stranger to me, but being a medical man he naturally felt free to call upon me and confide in me. He explained the outset of his wife's sudden illness and stated what remedies he had employed until I arrived, and ushered me into her room.

The poor woman was almost bloodless, and a glance at her wan and pinched face showed that she was not only perfectly clear headed, but thoroughly anxious and alarmed.

The picture was a cheerless one, indeed. The day was dull and leaden, and rain falling in ceaseless torrents, with no hope of cessation; a sensitive and nervous mother whose hours on earth were numbered; and three little children, the oldest one eight years,

toddling about in the room, all unconscious of the terrible calamity about to fall upon their hapless little heads.

If I had been able to do so, I would have preferred leaving that case in the hands of the Great Physician as soon as I saw it, but who will refuse to comfort the dying!

Heart stimulants, restoratives, brandy, warmth and prayer will not keep a heart beating when there is no blood in it, nor will they bring a warm glow of life to replace the icy hand of death.

The dying woman *knew* as well as I did, that she had no chance of recovery. I felt that she knew it, though when she pressed me for my opinion I evaded a direct answer.

At last I could not stand the sight of those little children in the room, and asked the father to let them go into another room to play. The mother called them to her and clutched them nervously and kissed them all several times with the most despairing look in her eyes I have ever seen in any human face.

Realizing fully the meaning of the removal of the children from the room, she turned to me and asked if she was dying. I told her that the end was near;

to be brave and courageous and stand it as she should.

She seized me by the hand and said I must stay by her to the last and let her hold my hand. With those cold, clammy, icy fingers, my hand was clasped as if in a vice and held until it seemed that the blood would burst from underneath my finger nails; held until she had declared in terror that she could see ten thousand hells; that she was going straight to hell and that it was just, and only what she deserved; held until with awful staring eyes, and abject terror on every feature, without one prayer or farewell she ceased to breathe!

By a powerful effort I prized apart the skeleton fingers and released my benumbed hand.

Time has passed considerably since this event, and one of those little children is now a practising physician, but it has not effaced any portion of this dreadful picture from my memory.

The religious mono-maniac may attach importance to such ravings, and say that this poor soul went to hell. In accordance with my ideas of love, mercy, and forgiveness, this poor woman had passed through hell, and her soul had returned to her Father to *rest.*

There may be a fire and brimstone hell, but this would be a paradise to the hell that many a poor

I TOLD HER THAT THE END WAS NEAR. [Pgs. 31-32]

soul endures on earth. What say you, Brother Doctor, to this for your experience?

Night was coming on, it was raining straight from the heavens, and a ten mile ride ahead of me to reach my home. The poor, distressed physician urged me to stay over night, but the ride home in darkness and storm was far preferable to remaining another half hour in that house.

I had not ridden fifteen minutes before the darkness was so great that I could not see my hand in three inches of my face. The darkness was so intense that I made no attempt to see or guide my faithful horse, Prince, whose name is as well worthy of a place in this little book as any friend the author has ever had.

Noble beast! how could I forget your companionship over the lonely road, day and night, through the burning heat of midsummer and the blinding snow storms of winter; you who have safely carried me over icy road, pole bridge, ditch and fence; in darkest night and amid the storm's awful roar in forest when the lurid lightning has riven the tall oak into splinters at our very feet—you and I have trembled together, but we have never turned back when duty called us. Would that I could look into those

honest and loving eyes again, and have you lick my hand once more.

My reins were dropped over the pommel of my saddle and I withdrew myself from the outside world and settled into a semi-sleepy reverie while the rain poured in torrents over my rubber suit and kept time to the regular slash, slash, of my good steed's footsteps in the mud.

As I jogged on I actually experienced that delightful sensation of thinking about nothing, that species of brain rest that is the nearest approach to sleep, while actually conscious of what is transpiring.

All at once my horse stopped so suddenly as to almost unseat me, and gave a snort of unusual alarm.

In a moment I was thoroughly aroused and trying to solve the problem of his terror. It was useless to try to see anything, for I could not see the faintest outlines of my frightened horse.

At first, I thought it might have been a drunken man in the road, or a horse, or some disabled animal, and I knew if such were the case, he would soon investigate it and pass along by or over it, for he would go anywhere I urged him. This time he refused to move, and responded to all of my urging

with increased snorts of real alarm and trembled so violently that the bottles in my saddlebags rattled like marbles.

Up to this time I had not felt the slightest alarm or nervousness, nor could I discern anything natural or supernatural; but it gradually came to my mind that I was in all probability somewhere in the neighborhood of Peter Adams' late residence. And good reader, while I am, or was not, a bit superstitious or cowardly, *my legs began to quake* and my tongue plastered itself up to the roof of my mouth!

So there were two of us in rather an unsettled condition. There I sat upon the back of a badly frightened horse that no power on earth could move out of his tracks, and I positively could not move or speak. But with all of my nervousness I could not see anything, not even by the aid of a very vivid imagination.

At last, I realized that if I did not do or say something to break the spell, I would stay there forever and become petrified or turned into a pillar of salt which would undoubtedly be melted down before morning, under the torrents then falling.

Reaching out, I could feel my horse's ears pointing straight ahead of him and knew that he was

looking at something certainly not prostrate on the ground. I drew a revolver, slid off my horse, and stepping in front of him, fired a shot, and involuntarily said, "I am satisfied now."

My horse immediately followed me without further alarm. I felt around and broke a few twigs and bunched them up on the ground that I might identify the spot in the morning, remounted my horse, and rode home without further adventure or mishap.

The next day I found my bundle of twigs and branches exactly in the mouth of the bridle path leading from Peter Adams' house into the main road, and a reference to my note book reminded me that poor Becky, his wife, had been dead exactly six months that night!

I do not know positively what frightened horse and rider that night, but I have never solicited any interviews with the departed since; for I am informed by my stable boy that "hosses kin certainly see ghostes."

DR. BELSHAZZER AS A BONE SETTER.

IT is truly said that every dog has his day, and it may, with equal force be said that many a promising young physician has come to grief from very trivial circumstances. I have known several physicians to have met their Waterloo through the medium of bottles containing no water at all.

Surgery is the banner under which the medical stripling usually appears before the public or at least under which he offers to sail, if opportunity should arise to give him any to do.

It strikes the public hard to call one's self a *Surgeon*. It smacks of blood and thunder, nerve, courage, carnage. It takes a brave man to be a surgeon. It takes a brave man to "stick a hog" or kill a sheep, but I have known fools to be engaged in abdominal sections and sheepkilling alike.

Upon surgery others have been shipwrecked, men who, without sufficient knowledge, experience or

moral character, have risked all for money and reputation and have slipped before the world. Poor fellows, like the sky-rocket, up, up, they go, dazzling the world with their empty vaporings until they fall into utter oblivion at once and forever.

These are the fellows who find ovarian tumors, where pregnancies exist; appendicitis, where gas distends; and "lacerated cervixes" where *nothing whatever* abnormal exists!

They are good fellows, though, for they are continually opening up unexplored fields and mapping out possibilities for their more conservative brethren, while these *adventurers* take the first risks as they have but little to lose!

It was in the field of semi-surgery that I met my first real "unpleasantness" in these two years of my developmental rustic practice.

I was the acknowledged leader on all matters, medical and obstetrical, in my section and, but for the unfortunate occurrence of a fractured femur in the person of a half developed dwarf, the son of an influential citizen near me, I might have left the neighborhood a poorer man, as I did, but certainly with laurels bright and untarnished. But who can read the future?

This youngster had succeeded in giving himself a very oblique fracture of the upper third of the thigh, and of course his father ignored all of the old physicians and sent for me, the surgeon.

I made the diagnosis in a most scientific manner; there was shortening, unusual mobility, and finally, crepitus.

Great guns! *crepitus*, yes, the old gentleman plainly *saw* crepitus himself, and fully verified my diagnosis. Though to be certain, before reaching the house, I had met the head man on the farm, and asked him if he was positively sure the boy's leg was broken.

He told me that he was, that he had "sot a many a one himself, and 'lowed he knowed when a leg was broke as well as any doctor, and better'n some!"

This was my first case of broken thigh, and I simply explained that it was best to let the limb lie in a comfortable position to allow swelling to subside before applying any retentive apparatus. I desired to go home and read up as to what I, as a surgeon, should do in such a case.

Well, I read all the old second-hand books that had been given me by old doctors retiring from practice, and concluded that about the most reason-

able thing I could do would be to put the boy in a coffin and pour bran all around him so as to fix him immovably and bore a hole in the foot of it and put a flat iron to his foot for continual extension.

If my fore sights had been as good as my hind sights I would have done that very thing and made a roaring success, and passed down to fame along with Desault, Physic and Smith. But I am sorry I mentioned this last celebrity, for upon this very scaffold I pinned my faith and fell through, greatly to my disgruntlement and subsequent sorrow.

While meditating on Belshazzer's Coffin Method for Fractured Thigh I met an uncle M. D., not a brother M. D., but uncle, because he was so much older and experienced than I. He had graduated in Baltimore and was tinctured with the views of one, Nathan R. Smith, who was in the habit of setting legs or thighs with what he called an anterior splint.

Of course, this elder brother had never set a thigh, but then he "knew exactly how it should be done" and told me just how to save the patient pain and discomfort, and make a reputation for myself.

The father of this boy was a very ingenious man,

and made an ideal Smith's Anterior Splint with a few unpatented improvements of his own in addition, to which I made no serious objections, only feeling at heart that he would be sharing a portion of my reputation and honor, as a surgeon, in this case.

Considering all of the circumstances, I was almost compelled to retain him as consultant and adviser, for he "had the drop on me," having furnished the case, made the splint and "read medicine."

We, the old man and I, accordingly fixed him up a la Smith, and much pleased with my, or our handiwork, I departed for other scenes of suffering, promising to see the patient next day.

Well, this case dragged on for several weary weeks; bandages got loose and slipped and swagged; the old man in my absence would undo and refix according to his judgment, and upon my arrival I would undo and refix, until at the end of six or seven weeks, we unfastened and turned loose one of the most thoroughly fixed cases of fractured thigh that I have ever seen in the hands of any practitioner, regular or irregular.

Between the old man and me and the boy's miserable, dwarfy constitution, we had a cannon ball

callous trying to glue up and cover a very badly adjusted oblique fracture, a rather bent thigh, and a leg shortened considerably.

I confess at first sight I did not feel any special pride in the case, but then I felt that it was good to have had consultation. I looked at the boy, then at the old man, and the boy looked at his leg and at both of us, alternately.

I have always had some little presence of mind in emergencies, and eased the situation a little by telling the old man that in the course of time when the absorptive process removed the interstitial callosities from the periosteal and medullary structures, and cell proliferation increased *the leg would get longer!*

He said, "maybe so."

While this was a bad job, it was not *so* bad, considering all of the circumstances, and very good surgeons have reported almost as much shortening as being allowable.

I never hinted to my old consultant, the boy's father, that inwardly I felt I should be drummed out of the profession for such a job, but assumed that it was the best I could do under the unfavorable conditions.

In a little time the boy was traveling about, hunting, etc., with not much of a limp. About this time, growing tired of the allurements of a country practice, I determined to move to a city and try my luck there.

My bills were sent to all of my debtors, and with somewhat the feeling of the highwayman when he holds up his defenseless victim, I sent a bill for services to the boy of whom I have written.

I was curious to know how the old man would take it, and was surprised and somewhat emboldened when he actually paid half of it. He told the collector that he thought that was about all he should pay.

If I had been sharp I would have dropped the matter right there, for this was not a good case to fight over.

However, I prodded him up again, and this time he flatly refused to pay and outlined his defense as that of mal-practice on my part.

He had reached this stage of rebellion by the advice and counsel of several of the older fellows in the profession whom he had slighted heretofore, but who rejoiced in the opportunity to indirectly stab the young competitor, nevertheless.

Feeling that my professional reputation was assailed by this charge, I at once went for the old fellow and whipped him twice in the magistrate's court. But he was tough; he laid for me and carried the case to the county court.

From this time on that reputation that I had bet so high on was a question of some uncertainty, for the average hayseed does not always make the best surgical expert.

The boy was brought into court, and to my horror instead of a little limp the artful old scoundrel had fitted up another apparatus for him which consisted of an enormous cork soled shoe at least five inches high.

When the poor boy was introduced as a specimen of my work it was a stunner. The big shoe got me, fairly kicked all of the conceit out of me, and gave me a very decided back seat for the day.

My counsel wisely asked for a continuance, as his chief witnesses were not on hand. The mild mannered judge granted it; for the time being, I got aside to catch my breath and see what was to be done.

This dramatic effect of the high shoe and short leg in the person of a pitiful, pale faced youth de-

OVERLOADED.

[Pg. 45]

fending himself from Shylock's claim, was overwhelming.

My "cell proliferation" had not helped matters, especially while the old coon of a defendant was proliferating cork and pasteboard on the shoe end.

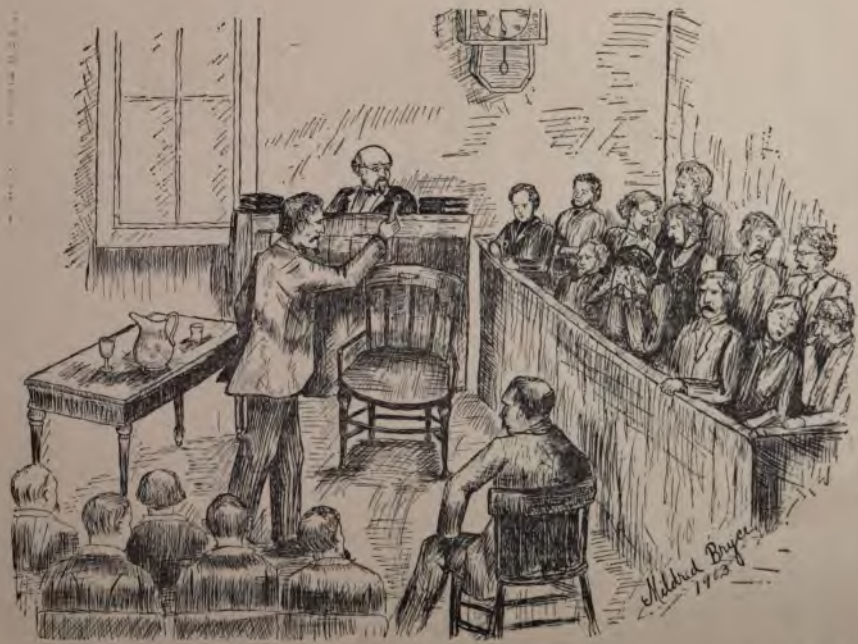
My attorney advised an effort at compromise, but I scouted the idea and demanded that the fight proceed to a finish, and demanded further that the boy be stripped in court and the *tape line run over that leg* with the cork shoe propping it up!

I knew I had some shortening, more than I liked, but I felt that unless it had shortened powerfully of late, I was barely inside of Hamilton's limit. I had a rising hope on this point, and as I breathed freer, that hope grew stronger.

My attorney did not favor a further fight, and in trying to keep up his spirits, overloaded and got beastly drunk. The last I saw of him, someone had propped him up in a corner of an adjacent fence, where undisturbed by expert testimony, refractory witnesses, or other terrestrial cares, he snorted and snored with ever and anon, a sudden jerk in his respiration that reminded one of Gabriel's final toot. Under all of the circumstances the star of my success was certainly not at its zenith.

"WE FIT IT OUT."

THE man who conducts a lawsuit to a successful issue, should know that he must do all of the work himself and pay his lawyer besides. Now and then we find an exception to this rule, where the lawyer actually does hustle around and helps his client out of the hole, or at least makes some sort of a show trying to do it. Like medical men, there are various grades of lawyers; the shyster, the bully and the liar, as well as the pedantic squirt and the dignified ass. Occasionally, an honorable man may be found in the legal profession, who will not handle a filthy case, and who is as anxious to see justice done to "the other side" as to his client. I have great respect for such a man in any profession or walk in life; but I, by no means, intend to abuse or underrate the value of the other varieties so frequently met. It is true that "the devil must be fought with fire," and that it takes a



LAWYER WITHEREDVINE.

[Pgs. 46-47]

"scoundrel to catch a scoundrel." These liars, tricksters, thieves and plugs, generally can find lucrative employment in the legal profession, and in many cases, a decent man can hire these gentlemen to do dirty work and handle filthy material, where the true gentleman would be affected with nausea.

From the last round I had fully come to the conclusion that unless my tactics were changed, the case of "Belshazzer *versus* Tobaccotwister" would go down in history as a decided flunk. I furthermore felt that I needed a cool, sober "trick lawyer," an oily tongued, lying scoundrel who could not only lie like a dog, but who knew how to find others capable of saying what was needed on the witness stand at any and all times, and under direct and cross examination, pro or con, up or down, in or out, but always the same lie without variation of color or twinge of conscience.

I had my eye upon three men, either of whom I considered capable of filling the requirements. One was an ex-minister, who, by his training in peaceful methods, knew how to bring out what was wanted with very little friction or antagonism. Another was a graduated thief and a black leg, a man fully

conversant with the customs, language and habits of the depraved. He could meet rascality with vulgarity, and browbeat and bully a witness into submission, and strange to say, the learned judges allowed him to do it, only calling him down *after* he had scored his point.

This fellow had been descended from what was thought to have been one of the F. F. V's; (the despised fool who does not know what these cabalistic signs mean, should be told that they stand for the "First Families of Virginia,") he had held high positions in the gift of the people, had remained a bachelor, and educated a number of mulatto children at excellent institutions of learning outside of Virginia, and away from the F. F's.

All in all, he was a most desirable specimen, but actually too highly scented for me, as bad as was my case. Many years after this he was engaged in a case against me, and I have been using assafoetida and iodoform ever since to keep the atmosphere around me breathable!

I finally selected a fellow that had no earthly pretensions to moral character. He had robbed his orphaned nieces and nephews; he had taken the bankrupt law three times against his creditors; he

was an abject coward, a legal sneakthief and a most excellent interpreter of the immortal bard's line, "Put money in thy Purse."

For my purposes I will call him Mr. Witheredvine, and thus the game opened again.

With all of his despicable qualities he was a well educated man, an amiable fellow, a born orator and a keen judge of human nature.

I said to him, "I am going in to win this time, will you do it?"

"Just as sure as Dick Mills and Ed. Jones are retained on that jury. Do you catch on?"

"I think I do, how much cash in advance?"

"Oh, not much, just a little for preparing the jury, helping the witnesses, and maybe a present for the judge."

I was struck with amazement at his latter assertion, but handed him a couple of X's and told him to let me know when he wanted more.

"Now," said he, "I don't want this case to come up today; can't you get some excuse to go back to town to see some urgent case, so that I can have an excuse to see 'that leg' and have a word with Ed. Jones before the case goes to the jury?"

By some hook or crook a telegram came calling

me at once, to see Mrs. Muldooley, dangerously ill, and taking a passing train, I left. Of course the case went over until the next day.

In the meantime my new lawyer had, in some manner, gotten a private interview with the boy, over whose unfortunate thigh we were fighting, and learned from him that he did not wear the high shoe except on public occasions; that he had been seen hunting the week before, and keeping up with the rest of the boys without that infernal shoe on.

"Now, Doc," said this good friend of mine, "just you tell me squarely how much shortening that leg can stand, to keep in with the authorities?"

"Two inches."

"Well, by granny, we've got em, for I measured the fellow."

"How did you do it?"

"Well, you see, while his old daddy was off talking up his case and fixing his witnesses, I found the boy sitting out in the wagon, looking lonesome, so I invited him into the hotel to my room, and he said he had no objection to my looking at his leg as he had no ill feeling towards you. I gave him a dollar to hurry up a little, and when he stripped off I just run my line from instep to crotch and found

barely two inches difference in the two legs."

"But from 'instep to crotch' won't do; the pelvis may be tilted and make up the difference. The measurement should have been made to the trochanter."

"Never you mind, Doc, about your trochanter, the *de*canter and my line will do the rest."

How good a thing it is to have an able lawyer. I began to feel better, in fact actually hopeful and quite arrogant as I talked my case about the court green.

The defendant's counsel was not at all satisfied with his legal opponent, and sniffed rascality in the wind.

My counsel declined the assistance of any medical expert, but requested me to remain near him and make apparent notes, and whisper to him now and then while he cross-examined the medical experts.

It was a real circus to see the stew we put those old fellows in.

Dr. Breakhate came on for the defendant and swore point blank that the case was bad surgery and real mal-practice.

I nudged the attorney, whispered and glared.

The old fellow winced, but looked determined nevertheless.

"Are you a surgeon?" queried Mr. Witheredvine.

"I do not proclaim myself a surgeon, but I know what is good and bad surgery."

"Did you ever set (here I whispered into his ear frowningly) an oblique fracture (another pause and whisper) of the upper third of the right femur, in a dwarf, sixteen years old?" thundered my attorney.

"No sir."

"Stand aside, you do not know anything about this kind of surgery."

"I said I knew"—

"Stand aside and keep order in the court room," said my *great* lawyer.

Looking over in the jury box, I saw Mills and Jones grinning with much satisfaction, at the onslaught of my attorney.

I felt better, and after a similar spat with another old medical gentleman ending in the same abrupt manner, and the examination of a few more witnesses, the case was ready for argument. As the dinner hour was at hand, a recess was taken and an armistice agreed upon until the afternoon meeting.

Coming to me, my legal representative said, "Now

Doc, is the time to secure the job; give me another ten and make yourself easy."

I gave him the X, and must say that he treated me honestly in its expenditure, if the faces and smiles of judge and jury could be taken in evidence, as they settled themselves cosily down to hear the roar of invective and thunder of eloquence from the attorneys.

The opposing counsel was a "blue blood,"—the best blood of Old Virginia coursed through his veins; but the *blood* had been kept so pure by constant inter-marrying that his spindle shanks and attenuated frame were not in proportion to the quality of his sanguineous material or the towering brain. In other words, while he had the pedigree of the Arabian, he sorely lacked the metal of the Mustang, and kind reader, "thereby hangs a tale."

His well measured and grammatically constructed sentences fell upon unsympathetic ears, for the Virginia plebeian has no over gushing affection for the Virginia patrician who looks down upon him while asking favors.

When my honored friend, Witheredvine, jumped into the arena chock full of conceit, bluster and ribald joke, there was a responsive chord audibly

and visibly touched in the bosoms of the sturdy farmers who held my fate in their hands. As he pointed to me as a youngster raised among them, one of their own, they warmed towards me and cast friendly glances at me. When he dwelt upon my kindness to the poor in their distress, at least five of them nodded approvingly in open view of the judge, and when he told in pathetic words how I had gone into the family of one of the jurors in this case, and stuck to them through a visitation of small-pox and saved them all, even poor little blind Mary, when others flinched from duty, old scarred faced Ben Williams turned in his seat, and drawing a dirty looking excuse for a handkerchief, wiped his eyes and let off a genuine sob!

The judge heard it; the jury all heard it; Witheredvine heard it; the opposite side heard it; everybody in the court room heard it. It was a sob of sympathy, gratitude, and apple-jack all in one superhuman effort—a sob that won my case!

"A CITY DOCTOR."

MY grandfather was a lawyer by profession and practice, and it is said by those who knew him that he was a very resourceful man when his clients were on the wrong side of a case. He was reputed to have been a strong fighter when the odds were all against him, and seldom lost his cases.

I never saw my grandfather as he ceased to practise law and passed to a more congenial place before I commenced using malted milk or talcum powder, consequently, I never caught on to any of his special tricks by personal observation, but it is said by those who have formed an opinion of my honesty that I have inherited some of his qualities to a remarkable degree.

It is said that he was a great friend to the poor, and as an example of his practical application of principles, I have heard it stated that a well-to-do

farmer in his county died and left his entire estate to "the righteous poor," and named my dear grandfather as his executor without security. It seems that being a most astute lawyer and man of justice he desired to carry out the provisions of the testator in a proper manner, and after advertising and trying to find the righteous poor in every way that a good and honest lawyer could, he held on to the whole estate as any real sharp lawyer should.

In order to please certain of my friends who wish to establish my reputation as a sharper, I cannot refrain from giving the court record in another case in which my beloved ancestor defended one of the poor.

A shiftless fellow, belonging to that class called "poor white trash" by the negroes of wealthy people, had been arrested for stealing a hog from one of my grandfather's neighbors. He came to the "Cap'n," (they all called my grandfather Cap'n B.) and asked him to defend him. He admitted his guilt outright, but said:

"Of course Cap'n, you can clear the devil hisself."

The old man mused and asked:

"Where is the hog?"

"It's hanging up in my cabin."

DIVIDING THE SPOILS [Pg. 57]

"Well," said the old gentleman, "you go and cut that hog exactly in half and hang up the biggest half in my smokehouse, and go home and keep your mouth shut and I'll clear you."

The next morning, the old gentleman found about one hundred and twenty-five pounds of his neighbor's meat hanging in his meathouse.

At the trial the evidence seemed overwhelming and the sentiment was strong for ridding the neighborhood of such a vagabondish thief. The fellow looked uneasy and my grandfather socked the witnesses with all the viciousness that a cross questioning and inimical lawyer could bring out, but they stuck to their texts with a pertinacity and clearness that nonplussed the old fellow; at last he told them to "stand aside" in a tone that clearly indicated that he had failed to get what he wanted. The prosecution had all they wanted and burned the fellow up alive.

My worthy and much admired grandsire arose and after casting a withering glance at the witnesses who had given such positive and severe testimony against his worthless client, said:

"Your Honor and Gentlemen of the jury: In arising to defend my client who has poverty against

him, but who has traces of the best blood in the Commonwealth in his veins *if you will go back far enough*, I too am prepared to give a little testimony on my own hook, though I have not gone upon the witness stand. There is not a man in the court room who will not believe my statement as quickly as they will the sworn testimony of the *individuals* (an overseer, his son, and a negro) who have testified against this *gentleman*. I wish to say that when Mr. Smith came to me to defend him, I went to his house and examined every place where he could have concealed a hog. I even went into his smokehouse and looked it through and through, and I am prepared to say and do say upon my honor and oath, if need be, that he has at this moment no more of Col. Harrison's hog in his possession than I have in my own meathouse today, and I ask that you acquit my client upon this testimony."

The jury promptly returned a verdict of not guilty and Smith was set free.

The verdict gave very general dissatisfaction, and there were open threats of treating Smith to a coat of tar and feathers. While my grandfather vowed he would protect his client and arrest anyone making any more threats even against Mr. Smith, he

took him aside and gave him this sensible advice:

"Smith, a court of law may clear a man, but there comes a time when it is wisdom for a man to change his place of residence, and I think that time has come in your particular case."

Smith moved out of that county that night.

Now for the sake of my respected ancestor and to quiet the restless spirits who are fond of placing hereditary sins upon the descendants, I will say that before leaving the court room my grandfather laughingly explained to the Colonel how he had acquitted Smith, and told him further that he would send the half of the hog in his house over to him and he supposed Smith would send *his half* over too. The big hearted Colonel proposed that they both give their halves to Smith, which was agreed to, and it is a fact that Smith carried the Colonel's hog away with him when he left the county, and the Cap'n had no fee at all!

Like Smith, I concluded that I would move to a larger field after the termination of my lawsuit described in the preceding chapter, though not impelled by the same causes. I accordingly packed my traps and located myself in a Virginia city and upon a classic street called Brook Avenue.

As I had an uncommon number of ups and downs before I reached a degree of professional opulence, I will reserve some of the incidents of my gradual uplifting for the next chapter.

PRETTY LOW DOWN.

UNLESS a fellow has money, or what is better, a pull on those who can help him, his first years in city practice are not always redolent with the fragrance of success. Indeed he may not always be able to sniff sufficiently of the odors of breakfast bacon and fried potatoes to give him an abiding faith even in his future professional success.

A thoroughly independent, honest and self-respecting physician without a dollar ahead, has an awful time in the practice of medicine, for he must suffer sorely for his conscience sake. The unethical and unprincipled scoundrel escapes this keen suffering that poverty forces upon the honorable gentleman who will actually starve to death sooner than do a dirty trick.

There have been, from all ages, men in the uniform of the medical profession like one of our not-long-ago politicians who announced that "honor would

not buy a breakfast," and I am sorry to say that this number is on the increase.

But good men have to contend with this class, and after they have suffered and lived down the poison of these vipers, they can at a moment of success, though it comes late, rejoice that they have kept their records clean, and hand down to the boy following in their tracks the talisman that kept them safe, the star of hope that cheered them on, the little diamond of honor and principle befitting the highest crown that mortal may wear.

What is the use in writing this way to you, and you, my noble brother of the healing art, who have grown old and stayed poor, just because you could not be a hog, like others fattening around you by their unprincipled conduct?

You have been there, you know the fellow I am talking about. You find him walking up the church aisle, away up to the front seats every Sabbath morning with a sanctimonious air. He catches every sucker who is fool enough to believe in his cant; and he gets the business right from under your nose, not because he is a better doctor than you, but because he is a bigger hypocrite. So an honest man must contend with many a man who wears the cloak of religion.

I must tell you of how one of these church goers treated me in a consultation.

This gentleman was a professor in a one horse college in the city in which I was trying to get a foothold long enough to tighten my belt between meals. He had been well educated, had a glib tongue, lived on a good street, drove a glittering buggy, was always in a thundering hurry, and was never seen except reading a big text-book on midwifery, as his negro man, Friday, drove him through the streets at a breakneck gait. He was an inveterate attendant upon the First Church, and could always be found far up towards the front when his hired dummy would come in, in the midst of the sermon and whisper mysteriously in his ear how urgently his services were needed.

No contemptible street fakir ever had a better advertisement than this fellow would give himself up and down that church aisle.

And yet, he was a gentleman, (sic) a regular Lukish "belovedphysician," honored, respected and shoved into a big practice, simply because he knew how to work the brethren and had no moral character to prevent him from doing it.

But to the professional picture: A man of mod-

erate means had employed me to attend his wife in an expected event, which I did, and as successfully and scientifically as any other man could have done. Unfortunately, within a few days after the birth of her little one, the poor woman went into a state of acute puerperal mania.

Under the influence of outsiders the name of this physician was suggested and urged as a consultant. I told the husband that I would meet him or anyone else who could do his wife any more good than I was doing. By appointment we were to meet at the patient's house the next afternoon at 4 o'clock.

I got to the house ten minutes ahead of the time, but the other fellow was there first.

He had talked the case over with all of the women and posted himself more thoroughly than he ever did for a prayer meeting.

"Well sir," said he in a pompous manner, "you've kept me waiting fully a quarter of an hour."

"Well," said I, "why didn't you go?"

"Why, I'm here for a consultation, and punctuality is one of the first considerations in a consultation," said he, while two or three old women admirers groaned and lurched in unison.

I was getting amused, and asked him under what

code he was working. You see I was as poor as the devil and had nothing to lose by being gritty, so I bucked up to him in an aggravating manner as I was entirely too young ordinarily to show anything but professional submission to this great and good hypocrite.

I knew I was terribly in need of practice and all the good friends I could make in the profession, but thanks to the good mother who lived hard for my sake, I was not in need of anything that a thorough education could give me and I felt every inch his equal with a little line to spare; so I played him.

"The Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association, and I commend it to you," said he.

"Well, doctor, here is your note appointing the hour of meeting yourself, and the town bell is just now striking the hour; so how about the code when the consultant comes *too soon*?"

"Well, I thought you were late, I beg your pardon, let's go in and see your patient," said he.

"All right doctor," I said.

And in he went leading the way, sat down most affectionately and examined the woman. He then, without offering to retire, told me that her bladder required catheterization and gave me other advice

as to how I should manage the case—all in the presence and hearing of those in and about the sick room. I enjoyed his performance very much and took it like a good-natured school boy, but was laughing in my sleeve at something I was going to do for him when we got outside of the sick patient's hearing. As he got to the front door, he said:

"Well, I'll meet you here tomorrow at the same hour."

"Doctor, you will never meet me again in any case," was my response.

"Why sir, what do you mean?" said he, turning very red and smelling a rat at last.

"Because you may know the Code of Ethics before the people, but you cannot be trusted behind the code. Presuming upon my uncertain professional foothold you have violated every principle of the code this evening. I decline to meet you again because you are deficient in moral character."

He bowed and made his demand on me the next day, but somehow never got the exact place of meeting arranged. These men won't fight; they'll pray, attend church, lie, and stab in the back, but they won't fight.

DOT LITTLE DUTCHMAN.

NOT a great while after I had been on the run for city practice, and when there was some possibility of my being run out for want of the paying end of that business, I had a case that offered me some relief, both from monotony of waiting and wanting.

It was in the early and melancholy days of the fall when nature begins to look as though she was going to close up business for the season. The clouds were leaden, and the wind whirling around the corner had piled up a big bank of premature brown leaves, and the smoke from the factories and foundries hung over the city like a pall.

This is the kind of weather that gives the Virginia dyspeptic the blues. It makes the Frenchman kindle his charcoal fire and take a long nap; and it makes a Dutchman cut more direful capers sometimes, especially if his lager beer has put his liver out of tune.

It's an ill wind that blows no one any good, and with the fretful gusts and lowering clouds came an impetuous call to go "over the Branch" to see a man who had "cut all of his insides out."

The messenger was a matter of fact kind of a fellow, and his information as to the nature of the man's injury was so unusual that I asked him what he meant by all of his insides.

"I mean," said he, "every one of his intruls, and old man Gimmi and his brother-in law is both trying to keep um somewhat in place untwell you git thar."

Now, for a starter this was quite a promising case, that was, if old man Gimmi could hold his holt "untwell I got thar."

Gathering my "tool bag" I ambled on out Brooke Avenue and across the historic stream known as Bacon's Quarter Branch, so called after the Bacon of colonial times who had his quarters pitched along its banks while whipping the Indians into behaving themselves.

"Ercross ther Branch" is the way most of the denizens locate their residence, and everyone knows where it is; so I went "ercross ther branch" at a quick step to see our suffering Dutchman.

Now, as I went through the odorous lanes and pathways between the butcher's slaughter houses and cattle pens, I felt that if there was danger in pestiferous odors and floating débris that the man with his "intruls" on the outside in that quarter was somewhat likely to get them infected before I could get them secured again on the inside.

A fellow will have thoughts, even if he is a young doctor, so my second thought was that 'twould be bad if he died before I got them back, so far as a shadow of title claim to a fee was concerned, so I hurried on.

It is wonderful how trouble affects some people and how they meet it. Some people see the funny side of things even at a funeral, and others determine to keep it lively in spite of misfortune and accidents.

The goodly company of honest German butchers assembled in the stuffy little room of their wounded countryman will ever live in my memory. They sought to cheer themselves and keep up his spirits with the brimming cup until the "dochtur" arrived; so instead of finding them bowed down with grief they were overflowing with good cheer, and unsteadily and by turns keeping Jacob's viscera somewhere near the recent opening in his abdomen. This

sight was a gruesome one even to a young doctor, and it was enough to have caused his friends to try to keep up spirits by pouring spirits down.

I wish to make a note of the conditions surrounding this grave case and ask my friends, who have no faith in nature's effort to cure without any aid from the sterilizers, scrubbers and spray squirters, how do they account for so many perfect and ideal results under such faulty conditions?

The patient was a man of middle age and an habitual drinker who, in a fit of delirium tremens, imagining that he had a devil in his belly, took up a butcher knife and ripped his abdomen open from the umbilicus to the "bottom," making an opening six inches long and allowing those before mentioned "intruls" to come out so that a fellow workman caught them in a greasy sausage tray and held them up in front of him until he was carried home.

My patient was in good heart, joked me a little and asked me to "try somedings" before getting down to my work of repairing him. He insisted that he was not in pain and wished me to get the devil out while I had him open. He had a drink or two on and showed no signs of shock or depression.

With the aid of a professional brother who was

passing at the time, I washed the sand and "fly blows" off his viscera, tied up a few twigs of the mesenteric artery, poured a basin or two of water into the cavity, flushed out all I could and returned everything *in statu quo*, took a half dozen stitches with a twisted flax thread plumb through the skin, muscle and peritoneum and, coming back from the other side, tied securely. Some old fashioned, resinous, adhesive straps were heated and plastered across the cut, and the neighborhood around sprinkled profusely with iodoform. This constituted the entire "fixing up," and he got well without an untoward symptom.

I am certain I sewed up seventeen million microbes along with Jacob's "intruls;" they "laid all sorts of hands" in and around the cut surfaces, and must have added thousands of germs from the stables, shambles and pig styes. By all reasoning processes, "Yacob" should have died from peritonitis, septicemia, and remotely, tuberculosis.

I always felt that science suffered in Jacob's recovery, but as his troubles were not at an end when I took off his straps and cut out his stitches, I will record how he outwitted the medical experts again to the discomfiture of medical science.

My Dutch friend was a peculiar looking genius, a little, wizard faced looking man with small, glittering eyes; he wore his scanty beard in the Irishman's style of a Newgate frill which left him a shiny face with a fringe standing out all around under his chin and jaws. He reminded me of a man with a bushy coon's tail tied around his neck.

He was able to carry more liquor under his waistcoat without actually failing or getting "obstreporous" than any man I ever saw, and could stand at his brother-in-law's butcher stall and cut rump steak or measure off link sausage by the yard with perfect equilibrium!

Now, as I have said before, he did his own surgery under the temporary spell of delirium tremens, which in plain English means an altered, vitiated or diminished supply of brain food in the blood. The poor fellow's brain was not diseased, but it was not functionating, if I may coin a word, correctly. In other words he saw things through faulty glasses.

While I had him under treatment he was compelled to abstain, to some extent, from liquor, and while I cured his wound, I had not cured his flippyty-floppyty brain. The fact is, I forgot that I was working on a distillery and a surgical case at

"DOT LITTLE DUTCHMAN." [Pgs. 72-73]

the same time; so when I went out one day to take a final good-bye of my patient who had recovered, lo and behold he wasn't there at all!

I was told by the relatives that he had got so bad that they had sent him to the infirmary for treatment for his mind. I felt that this was a little discourteous to me to say the least, and somehow had a notion that Jacob's mind would prove equal to the occasion.

This infirmary was a sort of adjunct to the medical college of the town and served as a fish trap to catch the patients of other doctors for the "professors," their sons and their son's friends who happened to be doctors and by some sort of nepotism held sway at the college.

The resident medical superintendent was an ex-naval officer, a trim, past-middle aged gentleman, who was exactly polite and courteous and knew how to keep within the bounds of propriety, ethics and orders given him by his superior "officers," the cunning gang of professors in the aforesaid medical college.

The funny part of it all was how my little Dutch patient fooled him in his malady.

It seems that there was an aching void in the

"gastrous cavity" of my quondam patient. He raved for "somedings ter dhrink," and when they offered him water it made him more rambunctious than ever, and his little eyes twinkled and rolled in wrath, while his Newgate frill fairly bristled around his face like a mad 'possum.

With his gutteral, broken English, and his continual raving for "somedings ter dhrink," the medical superintendent finally concluded that he must be crazy and called a commission of lunacy to "sit on him." The poor devil was in a stew at last, and he vainly tried to get in touch with me once more. He earnestly endeavored to get them to send for "Mishter Dochtur Prishe," but they either did not understand what doctor he wanted, or they did not want that doctor down there themselves; and Jacob was about to be put on trial to prove his sanity to the satisfaction of a very biased medical superintendent.

It is probable that the poor fellow would have been "incarcerated," but for an accident. By some means the officer who served the paper of commitment saw me and told me that they were going to hold a commission of lunacy on my patient that afternoon. I ascertained the hour and said nothing, but concluded to be present as an uninvited guest.

So just about the critical moment I called at the infirmary and unceremoniously walked into the apartment where the solons were investigating Jacob.

There sat the august assemblage, the old naval doctor as prim as a new pin; another dapper little medical man as associate examiner; two or three magistrates, and poor Jacob glaring at them and running on in his jargon at a perfectly unintelligible and terrific rate.

There are several very good reasons for committing troublesome patients to the lunatic asylums, now called state hospitals. It is a good way to get rid of them; it deprives them of their property (?!), and gets them boarded and clothed by the State. Lastly the medical examiners (at that time) got ten dollars apiece for their expert opinions which would have gone ordinarily to the man's family physician.

So I was not surprised when I was told that the case had been examined and the final touches were being put upon the commitment papers by the two ethical worthies mentioned. I actually felt a little indignant, and when I feel that way I am not over choice in my dialect; so between my pointed language and Jacob's jargon we had a most interesting little talk.

At sight of me the "demented" Dutchman broke out with a fresh attack of joy and cuss words.

"By gar, I ish safe! By tam, here ish mien dochtur Prishe! Ah! mien goot friendt, you got mien goots back in me, and all I vants in dems now ish a goot dhrink, und tese tam fools vants to make me crazy yust because I asks for somedings ter dhrink, und tis tam'd, old, sphry fool of a dochtur don't know der difference bedween a crazy man und vun vat vants a dhrink."

I talked pretty straight to the medical superintendent, ordered a glass of brandy for Jacob's anaemic brain, and advised the two medical examiners to tear up their commitment papers and treat the man white.

In a night or two, Jacob walked away from the infirmary on French leave and went back to his butcher's stall, and for many years sold me the choicest piece of tenderloin he could find in all his cuts; and though a "committed lunatic," never was interfered with by anybody, for he always had a friend in "Dochtur Prishe."

I PAID HIM BACK.

I have always hated two things in this world. One is ignorance where it is inexcusable, and the other is hypocrisy.

I knew a physician who filled the bill for both of these accomplishments so well that I never could endure him, and it really was a burden to me to be ordinarily civil to him when I unfortunately came in contact with him.

The person of whom I speak was another one of those goodey-goodey, milk and mushy, mother Hubbardy specimens, who passed for a man, but was really barely a third-rate granny even in Goochland county among the 'simmon pickers.

He was sent to the University of Virginia to study medicine; gave it up in despair and started back to his father who was a well-to-do farmer.

A friend meeting him just before he had gotten home shamed him out of returning and persuaded

him to turn back and go to Philadelphia and try again.

Unfortunately, this friend to the weak-kneed student was my own father and he ruined a tiptop farmer and helped to make the poorest excuse of a doctor that it has ever been my lot to meet.

This man, after practising for years in the country, essayed to become a city practitioner and, accordingly, moved into town a year or two ahead of me.

He was an *adjunct* professor in the one horse medical college here, and was so inflated by the honor of being made a stool pigeon to catch country greenhorns as students at the "cawledge," as he drawled the word out, that it turned his empty head entirely.

Poor fellow, he nearly worked himself to death for the college and didn't have the brain to see that he was hitched up like a jackass and driven by old Mac. & Co. for all that was in him. And then they kicked him out after they had worn him out.

This "professor" had joined in with his confréres and had said and done all he could to injure me. He did this like the cowardly crew to whom he belonged did their work; like the little fice snapping at the heels of people whom they dare not attack openly.

And why this animosity between these eminent professors and young Belshazzer?

Why, simply this: Belshazzer owned and published a medical journal known as the *Southern Clincher* or something similar, and he opposed the flippity flop methods these professors had for making doctors from raw material from the blacksmith shop and foundries and turning them loose on the people utterly unprepared to take the lives of the unsuspecting people in their hands.

Reader, if you have ever heard Dr. Belshazzer (or probably by this time you may have guessed his other name) villified by medical dwarfs connected with this Medical "Cawledge," the cause of these falsehoods may be found in the fact that the editor of the "*Southern Clincher*" struck them with the pen for their prostitution of the State's funds in turning the old school into a diploma mill as it were, rather than into an institution that could command respect and properly educate a man in medicine, surgery and good manners!

Therefore I did not really love this old fellow who barked at me with the rest of the pack, always under cover of darkness and at a safe distance.

Well, here's how I paid him back in part, one day,

and my only regret has always been that I got pretty near to the level of his kind to do it.

One afternoon I dropped in a harness shop up town to buy a buggy whip and was informed by the old fellow who owned the place that he felt "mighty blue."

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"I am going to be operated on tomorrow and may never come out of it alive," he responded sadly.

"That's bad," I replied.

"Doctor, do you think there is much danger in chloroform?" he said, with a tremor on the word danger.

"That depends upon who gives and takes it," said I very unconcernedly, looking over his stock of whips.

"What you mean by who gives and who takes?" said he.

"I mean if your heart and kidneys are sound and your surgeon knows his business, you might be cut up pretty considerably and then live long enough to pay your doctor for it," I responded.

The poor fellow wanted comfort and sympathy even though I was not his doctor and I felt sorry for him, so I let him proceed.

"Doc," said he, "what do you think of Dr. ——— as a surgeon?

He called the name of the party I have described above, and the very connection of his name with a surgical operation actually caused me to laugh outright.

"Whatcher laughing at?" said he, "this is a serious thing to me, at least."

"I am just laughing at the idea of old J——— undertaking to even cut a boil open," said I.

"You think he don't know his business then," said the harness maker, looking uneasy.

"Oh yes, he knows his business," said I, "only surgery isn't his business."

"Well whose business is surgery?" asked he.

"Mine," said I, looking about twenty per cent. wiser than the old idiot who had engaged to do the job for him next day.

"But you know, doc, he has got a good surgeon coming along with him to help him," said the old fellow.

"Humph! so he's got another doctor to help him. Does he pay that other doctor, or have you got to pay him?" I queried.

"Oh, they have fixed the price. I have got to

pay them forty dollars for the operation," said he.

The old man liked his toddy and to keep up his courage he had on a little on this occasion and insisted on conversing further with me about his trouble. I had gotten tired of it, and at the same time I half resolved to cut the old medical scamp out of his fee and show the harness maker what a fraud he was, though such conduct toward a professional *gentleman* would have been very unethical.

I said, "Mr. B——— you are telling me much that does not concern me, but if you insist on talking about your case just tell me all about yourself and I'll give you a friend's advice, free of charge."

"Doctor they say this is a serious operation and I feel very anxious," said he.

"What are they going to operate on you for?" I asked.

"For a 'toomer.'"

"A tumor, you mean."

"Yes."

"Where?"

"On the back of my neck. Here it is doctor," said he, bending his neck over and showing a shiny sebaceous tumor popping in and out of his big shirt collar as he bent his neck back and forth.

"I'D LET HIM RIP HER OUT, POP." [Pgs. 82-83]

"They said it might turn to a cancer—that it was a 'toomer' now," said he.

"Who said it might turn to a cancer?" said I.

"Dr. J———, and I have gotten so nervous thinking about it that I'd give a hundred dollars if the operation was over."

I was so disgusted at the scoundrelism displayed by this physician in taking advantage of his fears that I said:

"Mr. B——— are you in earnest? Do you want that thing out?"

"That I do doctor."

"Well," said I, "if you are not a coward, I'll take that 'toomer' out the back of your neck in two minutes."

"Oh, I'm not afeard of a little pain, but you ain't got your knives with you," said he sobering up decidedly.

I opened my pocket case and in a half authoritative way said: "Come here and sit on this wood-box a minute."

He turned to his grown son who was working in the shop and said:

"Cholly—what you think of it?"

"I'd let him rip her out, pop," said "Cholly" with an intonation on the word "rip."

"Doc, its going to hurt like h—l, ain't it?" said he, as his liquor was dying out fast.

"I told you you were a coward," said I.

"Ain't you going to give me nuthin to ease the pain?" said he.

"It doesn't pain you, does it?"

"Doc, stop your foolishness and flip her out," said he, bending his neck over like a man.

One sweep of the knife and I turned out his "toomer" and stitched up his hide in a minute or two, and his trouble was over.

He couldn't realize that the great operation had been performed, without chloroform, without help and almost without pain, and turning a very thankful face towards me he said:

"Doctor, you are a buster, what you charge?"

"You can pay me by helping me carry this joke a little further," I said.

"I'll do anything I can for you doctor," said the thankful old fellow, trying at the same time to force a few bills in my vest pocket in a clumsy way, and which I firmly declined, and let him know that I would not have acted so for *money*.

"Well," said I, "I want to have some fun out of your doctor, and pay him back in some of his own coin."

"Anything you say, doctor," he replied.

I requested him not to let it be known that his "toomer" had been removed, but to stay in bed the next morning and let his surgeons come to remove the formidable and possibly malignant growth, and tell me how they took the affair.

The old man had a lively appreciation of fun and entered fully into the spirit of the thing, though he was thoroughly indignant at the deception that his family physician had practised on him. So he played his part well and narrated the particulars with much gusto when he and "Cholly" came around to my office a few days after.

"Well, doctor, you just orter bin thar," said he, in referring to the visit of the two medical men next day. "I had the bed all ready to hop in and had told "Cholly" to let me know when they drove up, so as to settle down."

"Well, about ten o'clock 'Cholly' (he always called his son Charles, 'Cholly') hollered up, 'Pop they're here!' So Cholly he came on up with them looking as solemn as a preacher. I settled down with the cover all around my neck an 'peared awful oneasy."

"Well, they got out ther knives and hooks and

sponges and things, and presently the other doctor said:"

"Hadn't you better try his heart?"

"I said, said I, "Doctor, hadn't you better edzamin this 'toomer' before you operate?"

"Oh no," said he, "we know all about it, we'll soon take it out and show it to you."

"I laughed to myself and wondered how they could do it when I had it down in the shop in a jar of alcohol."

"But it was getting close to me as they commenced pouring the chloroform out and I says, says I, Doctor, before going too far I wish you would look at this 'toomer,' I think it has shrunk fully one half and it mout get well without cuttin."

"'Never!' said both of um."

"But I want you to look at it," says I.

"So old J——— he onpins my collar and when he seen the 'toomer' gone, he just looked reproachful at me and says: 'What you do me that way for?'"

"I says to him, says I, Dr. Belshazzer, a friend of yourn, did that while I was mendin' of his bridle in the shop. I ain't done nothin' to you, and you ain't gwine never to do nothin' to me nor my family agin, says I."

A DISAGREEABLE PATIENT. [Pg. 87]

A DISAGREEABLE PATIENT.

IN the earlier years of my practice I had an office across from the third police headquarters and was on very friendly terms with men and officers. It was a struggle with me to keep the inner man supplied and my cheap office rent liquidated to the satisfaction of "sorrel top," as the young real estate rent collector was familiarly known. Under the circumstances I was not particular about the grade of patients I served but took any that came along, regardless of caste or creed, white or black, native or foreign, from Butchertown to Screamersville. From this miscellaneous patronage I would hardly have subsisted but for the alertness of the police officers in throwing their emergency cases into my hands. These men—good fellows—would have me to see any case that they could make an excuse for on the grounds of accident or urgent injury, and they helped me greatly. The bulk of

these men are now dead, but I can bear testimony before St. Peter that they behaved with Christian charity and brotherly love towards me when a few fees out of the city's till went a long way towards keeping young sawbones in a thrifty state of health.

Well, one cold November evening when it was drizzling and chilly, I was sitting in my little office meditating on my chances for procuring enough of the wherewithal to subsist until the blue-birds sang again, when a timorous knock came to my ears. Visions of a good patient and a fat fee came before me as I opened the door.

A timid looking boy asked me to come to see his mother a little way up the street at once. As I have said, I took anything that came along, consequently I followed the lad to his home in west Marshall street. It was raining so I did not ask the boy the particulars of his mother's condition, but followed him as he led the way muffled up in a great overcoat about three sizes too large for him. In a little while he halted before a side alley gate and said: "We will have to go in this way."

It struck me as being peculiar going in by the alley way if they were people of any "standing," but I followed along and awaited my doom.

We ascended a flight of steps and traversed the hallway to the front door which I observed had been locked and had no key in it.

The hallway was feebly lighted and contained a broken chair and a pegless hatrack. My ideas of a big fee were on the wane, as I took in the surroundings. The boy opened the door of his mother's room and said: "She is in there." I noticed that he immediately retired as soon as he pushed open the room door.

I walked quietly in and found an enormous red-faced woman sprawled upon a bed in the corner of the room, groaning and snoring as if she was suffering with cramp colic and apoplexy combined. This room was badly lighted, very much disordered and smelled of whiskey and sauerkrout.

I was a little non-plussed as to what line of practice to adopt. I was uncertain whether to retire or advance and practise my profession.

As I surveyed the monstrous creature who had not discovered me at that time, I felt some misgivings as to my ability to cope with her should she be delirious or boisterously drunk. It occurred to me that I would like to have some member of her family present when I aroused the sleeping beauty

for examination and prescription, and I accordingly made a step backward toward the door for the purpose of calling her husband, if she had one, or the boy even, who would have been a decided comfort to me at that time, when all of a sudden she poised herself in an upright position, dashed by me, locked the door and took the key with her.

Then turning her bleared eyes upon me, she advanced in a menacing and maudlin manner and said: "Now, you just explain what you are doing locked in my room here?"

I was completely taken aback, and said: "I am here to attend you."

"Oho, attend me, hey! Well now if you don't explain at once, I'll make it lively for you," she said.

By this time I realized that I was in an ugly predicament and heartily wished I was back in my little office without any fee at all.

From the location of the house and the appearance of the virago, it dawned upon me that I had encountered one of the most dangerous and depraved women in the city and I prepared to sell my life dearly, as the dime novel boys write it.

So I put on a defiant air and said: "Look here

woman, open that door at once and let me depart or I'll make it lively for *you*."

To my surprise she made a pass at me like lightning, which I dodged by ducking promptly, but on her counter charge she landed one of the "stingingest" and sharpest ringing smacks on my left jaw I ever felt, and being unprepared for it I lost my balance and fell sprawling on the floor with my head partly under the old high-legged bed upon which she had been reclining when I entered.

As times were decidedly lively and rather pressing I made no attempt to return to the fray, but crept on under the bed for the purpose of collecting my wits and escaping the enemy.

While the old rubbish, dust, cobwebs and bad odors under that bed were not at all to my liking, yet it was the most welcome spot I had struck for a long time, and but for the stifling dust I would have actually breathed easily once more.

The ludicrous position I was in caused me to laugh outright, as I took in the whole affair, and at the same time, I was getting enough of the fun as I began to perspire in my stuffy quarters. I knew that I was actually in personal danger, as the woman was a tremendous, drunken Irish brute, and just

about half mad. I was getting mad myself, I was hungry and ashamed of being actually on the run, dodging under the bed—and from a woman at that!

There was an old bootjack under the bed, and I got hold of it, peeped out to see where she was, and cautiously crawled out fully determined to knock her brains out if she made any further attack or demonstration. In fact I came out fighting mad. She met me squarely and made a rush at me. By some chance she jerked the bootjack out of my hands before I could hit her and I was forced to do the most cowardly thing a man ever did. I grabbed her by the hair with both hands and yanked her down on her knees. It was a death-struggle for both of us.

She made a few frantic efforts to rise, but securing a good hold of her dirty, oily, black tresses, I snatched her forward so that she had to sprawl her hands on the floor at each snatch to save her face from being smashed. I found that by unmercifully snatching her forward I could keep her so occupied in trying to keep her mouth and face off the floor, she would not have an opportunity of tripping my legs from under me, and this is all that saved me. So for a few moments we went around

and around there, bumpyty-bump, bumpyty-bump, I yanking and she catching on her hands.

It was a terrible ordeal for both of us. I would have given ten dollars, as poor as I was, to have been able to release her, but I dared not.

Finally she struggled less and without any warning, screamed out with all the power of her lungs, "Murder!" "Murder!" "Help!" "Fire!" Her shrieks were blood-curdling, but I held on to that head. And as she made one more desperate effort to rise I shook her down so that her next yell of murder was cut up into a sound like "Mur-hur-dur-dur!"

To my great relief and mortification at my predicament, I heard hurried and heavy footsteps on the porch, and in a minute or two the doors were forced and three or four policemen rushed into the room and rescued me!

"BREAD UPON THE WATERS."

WHEN I was a young country practitioner I received a call one evening to meet an old physician in consultation over a very critical case, fifteen miles away. This meant a long, lonely ride for half the night. I ate a hasty supper and mounted my faithful little sorrel horse and set out in company with the messenger.

The night was very dark and much of the way over rough roads. In the course of the ride I had opportunity to learn something of the nature of the patient's trouble, and of his condition in life. It seemed that he had a wife and one little daughter, and that he had always been an industrious man, and now, just as he was about paying for his little farm and cottage, he was possibly nearing the end of his life.

By the time I had made the long ride I was beginning to feel a deep interest in the little family

of three, in which the happiness of each one depended so much upon the welfare of the other.

At last, long after one oclock, I came in sight of lights shining among some trees and shrubbery some little distance from the road, and from seeing the outlines of a woman moving cautiously to and fro, I felt that I was approaching the suffering patient's home. The messenger told me that I was at the place, and dismounting I was met by the doctor who was in attendance. He told me his fears for the poor man and conducted me in at once to see him.

The poor wife was walking about on tiptoe, and the little girl of eight or nine years was sleeping on a little cot in the same room with her sick father.

A hasty examination showed me that the poor fellow had but a short while to live. He seemed to realize that he would not get well, and asked us to do what we could for his family should they need our help after he was gone. He kissed his little child affectionately and refrained from paining her by telling her "good-bye," as is so often done by persons who believe their end is near.

I was struck with the manly and considerate behavior of this poor farmer. He died before morn-

ing, and as I was taking my leave his wife, with tears streaming down her eyes, asked me what I charged for my long ride and all night visit.

I told her not one cent. That I was a poor young man, but she and her little orphan child were far more in need of the fee I would have charged than I was, and she was welcome to my services.

She then said: "Doctor, what would it have been if you had made a charge?"

I told her fifteen or twenty dollars, but that I never intended to receive a cent from her, and not to think of the matter any more.

I bade her good-bye and received her "God bless you, Doctor," in return, and the episode passed out of my memory.

Many years afterwards, when I was laboring under great financial pressure and hardly knew whether to "pull up stakes" and seek a better field or try to hold out a little longer, this poor woman's prayers for my good luck were answered in a most substantial manner and the scenes of that night came back to me vividly mirrored.

By some unwise investsments in a little way, I had lost what little, I had saved. I was unable to pay a few debts for actual needs, and was pressed

"GOD BLESS YOU, DOCTOR."

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by some heartless creditors. I had the solemn assurance of the high constable that unless I could pay twenty-five dollars for my quarter's rent within the next twenty-four hours I would be grabbed up and put out on the sidewalk. Just think of it, twenty-five dollars to be found in twenty-four hours and not a dollar of it in sight!

I was usually of a mercurial temperament, but on this particular evening my spirits had fallen considerably below zero. Think as I would, I could not see where I could collect or borrow this amount. Who is going to lend a doctor anything when he has nothing in sight but a straw hat and a two dollar pocket surgical case?

That night I retired, not by any means satisfied with the disposition of this world's goods among the people of the earth, and dreamed uneasily of the sheriff and high constable alternately, and awoke to find myself at least on the inside of my office, instead of on the sidewalk. I thought I would try a little ruse on the constable and play sick a day or two and hold the fort and trust to dead chance. I had the strongest repugnance to being *put out.* Then I concluded to face the music and meet him like a man. About nine o'clock, a countryman stopped

his wagon in front of my office and inquired if I was Doctor B———. Upon telling him I was, he put a good sized bundle on my centre table and laid a sealed envelope down addressed to me. He departed at once, and as I was more concerned about trying to find some money for the rent man than anything else, I never opened the letter or inspected the bundle, but went out and tried to collect something until I was tired and disgusted with my fruitless task. About midday I returned with absolutely nothing collected. I had hardly been seated ten minutes before the rent agent and the high constable called upon me to carry out their threat. Somehow or other I had gotten callous and did not care what they did. I began to feel that the world was using me almost too hard. I told them I was glad to see them and they could proceed to realize on my effects. Poor fools! Who knows the mutations of Providence? Both of these people are dead—one filled a drunkard's grave and the other a pauper's—and poor "Doc" is not a beggar yet and is still in the land of the living. But to my story. They were looking around to see what they could levy on when the owership of the unopened package arose. For the first moment it occurred to me to open the letter

accompanying the bundle. I hastily tore open the envelope and read as follows:

"Dear Doctor—Please find enclosed a little token of regard from the widow and orphan whom you were kind to years ago. I am fully able to send this now as my circumstances are comfortable. With God's blessing upon you,

Your friend,

MRS. L."

I shook three crisp twenty dollar bills out of the envelope and felt that I had gotten back bread cast upon the waters at a most opportune time. The bundle contained two fine old Virginia cured hams, and for the time being I feared neither the grocer nor the high constable. I paid my rent that day, and know that good deeds seldom go unrewarded, for the good God has never allowed me to be cornered as closely since.

A TROUBLESOME DOG.

WHEN I was a medical student I had to be very careful of my funds to enable me to hold out long enough to graduate I did not have many things that I would have liked, but was very thankful for making out as well as I did.

But I had my troubles and one of them was a big bull dog that interfered greatly with my peace of mind. I must tell you all about him.

The old gentleman who kindly rented me a back basement room and allowed his cook to prepare my meals and serve them in my apartment, owned a tremendous big brindle bull dog. This dog, as the aged couple had no children, was about the worse spoiled beast I ever knew, and being highly fed and stopped up in a small back yard, was a very unpleasant companion at times. I confess I feared him more than the devil himself, while the old gentleman looked upon him as a pet son almost. The

problem that confronted me was how to keep on good terms with the old man and his dog at the same time, for I knew that if any rumpuss ever arose between me and the dog, I would have to leave, and as I got cheap rent and a cook free, it was a serious question indeed. Now the trouble was that this dog had free access to the whole house and roamed around and stopped where he pleased. When he went into the old gentleman's parlor, and they wanted him to go out it was just a question whether "Watch" desired to leave or not, and if he wished to remain he could only be gotten out by coaxing. Sometimes it took himself, wife and cook to devise means to get him to leave any particular place. I made friends with him as well as I could, but the dog knew by instinct that I hated him. He knew I was afraid of him, and he took advantage of it. He would frequently step into my bedroom, spring up on the bed like a lion and lay there like a lion too, for I seldom had viands tempting enough to allure him off, and I dared not order him off.

The worse feature of "Watch's" association with me was his soiling my clothes when I came home. I generally came in at the side alley gate and went down the little three foot alley to the rear basement

to my room, as it avoided ringing the front bell and annoying the old people, but the dog had the freedom of this alley and would come bouncing to meet me and throw his great paws on my clothes. If I told him sharply to "get down" he would give me a warning growl which was enough for me.

I got very tired of this continued fear of the big dog and of his lording it over me, so finally I concluded to work a scheme on him unknown to the old gentleman. I did not wish to hurt him openly or raise any noise in fixing him, for politic reasons. It was a foregone conclusion that Watch and I had to live on that lot and that one or the other had to be boss. I got a suggestion one day by seeing him jump away from me pretty lively when I spilled a glass of water near him; and it occurred to me that as water was noiseless and harmless it might prove a Waterloo for Watch if properly used!

So one day I struck the happy idea of "rushing him" with water. In the dissecting room were a number of huge metal syringes used for injecting the veins of dead bodies with a preservative fluid. These syringes held over a quart, had a nozzle of excellent calibre and a piston fully eighteen inches long. While surveying one of them one day the

idea struck me that with such an instrument loaded with ammonia and water I could teach Watch a few lessons.

The poor old colored janitor, who has long since gone to rest, generously allowed me the use of one of these instruments and all the "harmonier" I wanted too.

In those times men wore large circular capes very much in place of overcoats and I had a very large one, under which I could conceal the big syringe with its quart charge.

As the trial had to be secret, I had to bide my time.

Finally in about a week after I had my plans perfected the old gentleman and his wife drove about seven miles in the country to spend the day with a relative, and making a compact with the cook that she would never divulge the secret, I went to college, loaded up and returned "prepared for action."

I did not bother bringing note books back. The only thing I had under that ample cloak was a good working syringe and a quart of the most villainous mixture of ammonia, assafoetida and tincture of capsicum that was ever compounded, for I felt that somebody had to give under that day.

Just as I opened the alley gate the big brute came rushing up like a wild tiger apparently friendly. I threw back my cloak, leveled my squirt and in a commanding tone said "go back, you scoundrel!" It was the first moment I had ever enjoyed my self-respect in the presence of the dog and it was a short moment too, for with a savage growl and run he came straight at me.

"Swish!" went the gun and he fell, rolled, howled and tucked his bobbed tail, making for the rear. I followed with about a forth of a load left in the syringe, and to my dismay found he had slipped into my room and was coiled up on my bed, looking rather defiantly at me. I said, "get out!" and he made another very light growl when I shot him full in the face with the balance. In his haste to leave he broke my water pitcher, and ran to the extreme limit of the back yard. I followed and simply ordered him to "get off" and he leaped a five foot fence and landed in Mr. William Davis' back yard with a howl. I persuaded the cook to go over there and get him back before the old couple returned.

From that time Watch knew who was his master, though I kept it a secret from the old people until

one day I proved too smart and gave myself away. I must tell you about this for it was the end of my stay with a couple of kind-hearted old people who suddenly lost their affection for the poor boy they had befriended.

One day the old people had some company and the dog walked into the parlor and stretched himself out at full length. The old man tried to get him out but he could not. The old lady tried him, but no go, then the cook tried him, but without avail. I had no lectures that day and unfortunately was at my room. By some indiscretion I called up to Mr. P. and told him I could make the dog go out.

"*You* make Watch do anything," he said, "why I can't, and I know you can't; he would eat you up alive and I don't want you hurt," he continued.

I went on into the parlor with a medical journal rolled up somewhat like a syringe barrel, pointed it at him, drew my right arm back suddenly as if about to shoot him with his former dose, and he fled in such haste that he knocked over and broke a handsome vase and never stopped until he had leaped over into a neighbor's yard. The next day the old man told me I could look for another room,

as he "wouldn't have had that dog cowed in that way for a thousand dollars, and *no gentleman would'er did it.*"

MY PRESCRIPTION CLERK.

SOON after I commenced the practice of medicine, I was called to see a little daughter of a poor carpenter living on the outskirts of the city, who had been declining for quite a while. I was young, and had not established a reputation that brought me many wealthy patients; so most of my professional work was among the very poor people, certainly for the first few years of my career. I was on very uncertain ground myself, and maybe it was a fellow-feeling that made them so "wondrous kind" in employing me.

At all events, I never regretted the call to poor little Mary, the daughter of the humble carpenter. The little wan face of a child of about twelve or thirteen years with its great big blue eyes, blue veins over its temples and hollow cheeks made a picture that we see far too often, and one that does not add to the hopefulness of the case. The little

girl was excited and, like many children, looked upon the doctor with a certain fear and uneasiness. Her little heart was beating very fast and she was panting for breath; she was feverish and restless and pale, oh, so pale. Her father had to be away at his work every day and she was looked after by an aunt who lived there after her mother's death, taking care of her and her two younger brothers. This aunt was a matter-of-fact, good woman, with not very much sentiment or real tender affection for children, though she certainly seemed to discharge in a faithful manner what she thought was her duty. So while I was making some slight examinations of the child, the clock struck an hour, and the prim aunt got up and went to the sideboard and came back with a bottle and a greasy looking spoon.

"Here Mary," said she, "it is time to take your medicine," as she poured out a brimming table-spoonful of as ugly looking cod liver oil as I ever saw.

I saw the shiver pass through the child's frame as she said, "Oh, aunt Dolly, let me off this time, I feel so badly."

"No, the doctor said you must take it, no matter how you felt."

"HERE MARY, IT IS TIME TO TAKE YOUR MEDICINE." [Pg. 108]

The little patient cast a look of supplication toward me and said, "This doctor hasn't said so, and papa said I could have him in place of Doctor J."

"Hold on awhile, said I to the faithful aunt, "maybe we can do without that dose today."

The look of gratitude that I saw in that fevered little face was the largest fee I collected that day, and it well repaid me for my interference in the regular routine of fish oil dosing!

It is needless for me to tell you that little Mary had consumption, and that she was in need of sunshine, pure air, warm clothing, good food and some diversions and amusement, far more than nauseous medicine.

But it required money to procure these remedies and this is what Mary's father lacked; so I did not grieve him by telling him to perform a miracle.

As I was returning to my office I met a well-to do young fellow who had just about thrown himself to the dogs through drinking and gambling. He lived as a bachelor and had no family connections as far as I knew. He seemed somewhat sobered up and I asked him if he would like to help me save a human life.

"Oh, doc," said he "I ain't no good; no use to

preach to me. I can't quit and I ain't worth saving."

"It's true John, you are hardly worth worrying about, but it's somebody else I want you to help me to save."

"Well, doc, I am with you, but how can I help you?"

"Come to my office by ten o'clock tomorrow morning."

To my surprise, John was on time the next morning and went with me to see the poor sick child. He took in the situation and I think he visited her as often as I did under the contract that I prescribe and he fill the prescriptions.

John had a pretty heavy prescription bill to look out for, as I ordered my remedies from various quarters; and more often the prescription would read for mutton, lamb or tenderloin than for "cod-liver oil and creosote." In fact John took care of that child like a genuine friend, and with the opening spring and warm sunshine and flowers, Mary was well of her consumption, and John was cured of a disease worse than death. Getting into good company and doing good saved him from a drunkard's grave.

"THE WALKING DOCTOR."

BY dint of close collecting and hard work I had begun to make a subsistance as a city practitioner, and moreover had saved by gradual small deposits a few hundred dollars in one of our city banks devoted to "taking in" the earnings of the small depositors. I had also reached the degree of importance demanding a horse and phaeton, and accordingly owned one and kept a colored man to drive me around, so that I was on about an equal footing professionally with the other fellows. It is true I did not wear striped and checked gambler's clothing, tan shoes, useless eyeglasses, put a big brass "B" on all parts of my horse's harness nor paint my buggy a surgeon's red; nor do any other special act to mark myself as an idiot or milk sop, but between a "walking doctor" and a driving one I was riding with the best!

It may not be known to many people that there

is a difference between the intelligent, educated, honest physician, who would prefer to use his legs and feet in getting from house to house to see his patients and live within his means, and the medical monkey who dances to any tune set for him and at anybody's expense save his own. Unfortunately the "walking doctor" is rated away back by the majority of people and the apes in the profession help them in their rating. Therefore a young man cannot afford to be a classified any longer than possible as a "walking doctor."

Some of the brainiest men who ever adorned the local profession living in the city of Richmond were courageous enough to do their parctice on foot for many years, and during the whole time that they so practiced they didn't get enough business to justify the purchase of a copy of Bryce's Visiting List once a year in which to record the same.

And so we drove along with the procession! It is true my equipage was oftener seen in front of the residences on Brook Avenue, Short Clay and Charity Streets, than on the more fashionable portions of Grace and Franklin Streets, but I would have my Richmond readers to understand that on some portions of Franklin Street I had as good patronage as

any other man, and they paid me in money too! If I am not mistaken, Mr. W., a once prominent Broad Street bookseller told me that he was born in one of these Franklin Street houses in which I had quite a run of practice.

But even with my horse and buggy, and my rising prospects, I sometimes did the rough work and missed the consultations, certainly in the following case:

There was an old practitioner in a few squares of my office who had a knack of keeping in with everybody and getting along in the easiest way he could. This is a very sensible and politic way of doing, but usually the friendship of such soft-soap creatures is not worth the having, for like the sapling in the storm they bend the way the wind blows. They are your friends while you are watching them, but God help you when an adverse tide blows your way, for they cannot face the storm for a friend.

This old fellow had a very good paying family living down on Brook Avenue near the branch, and fortunately for me the case of which I am going to speak occurred in the person of a little girl about eight or nine years old. The child was taken with a croupy bronchitis that got along moderately well

during the day, but "raised cain" about midnight and almost frightened the parents out of their wits.

The old family physician, in my estimation, was not much of a doctor as far as ability went, but he had his yellow and time-worn parchment diploma framed in his office; belonged to the Richmond Academy of Medicine and the State Medical Society, and as far as credentials went was "regular" and "in good standing" which covers a multitude of sins and defects.

Well, about one o'clock at night following the first day of this little girl's illness my bell rang and the father of the child appealed to me very urgently to go at once to see his little daughter who was suffocating to death. He said Dr. T. had requested me to go for him as he was too unwell to go out that night.

Of course I went and after about an hour relaxed her and got her breathing all right.

The next morning the old fellow drove by my office and thanked me most profusely for seeing the case for him.

Exactly the same thing happened the next night and I trotted on down with my teeth chattering

from the cold and "cotch the little girl's breath for her again."

The next morning the old doctor came by and thanked me still more profusely.

The next day in returning from a visit to a patient out on Brook road I had occasion to drive past the house in which my old friend's patient lived and noticed his buggy and that of another physician standing in front of the place.

My driver, a very observing negro, remarked "consultation."

"Yes," said I, "who is the other doctor."

"Koleman."

"All right," said I, "I'll Koleman him about one o'clock tonight if he doesn't look sharp."

I was very much irritated at such ungratefulness on the part of the old family physician and determined to treat him to a case of allopathic resentment at first opportunity.

I really did not wish the little child to have any more trouble, but just had a small hope that there would come one more spasmodic kick-up around the neighborhood of her glottis about one o'clock that night. I even went so far as to pray for her recovery when I sent up my evening prayer, but I

am afraid it was not a very earnest prayer. About midnight I was again aroused by the loud calls and knocking of her father.

"Doc you will have to go with me again," said he.

"Huckum so," said I.

"Because Doctor T. says I must call on you in his place."

"Have you been after him tonight!"

"Yes sir, and he says I must get you to go for him!"

"Why don't you have consultation over that child," said I.

"I am going to tomorrow," said he.

"Who you going to have," said I.

"Why you of course," said he in a most innocent manner.

"Ain't had anything like that at your house yet have you?"

"Sur!"

"I say you ain't had anything like a consultation at your house yet have you?"

"Doctor hurry up and come along, this isn't the time to be worrying me with all your questions; by granny I am able to pay you for what you have done for my child and for what you will do tonight," said he.

"All right, I am yours to command," said I.

I relieved the child, and told him plainly that I intended to charge him just as much as the law would allow me for the visits I had paid her.

Next morning old skinflint came by and thanked me for the third time for going for him.

I looked him straight in the eye and said: "Doctor why don't you have a consultation over that case and throw something in a young fellow's hands?"

"I have been thinking about doing that very thing," said he.

"Seems to me I would have held one yesterday about two o'clock if I had been you," said I.

It was pitiful to see the expression on his face as it dawned upon him that I had caught up with him. He was too sensible to try to palliate his ingratitude, and just said, like a man: "Doctor charge him well for all you have done for him."

I felt that both the father and the old doctor needed a good lesson and I socked him heavily for those three night visits. He paid me thirty dollars, and Jim Gibbs got it from me before night. All of my days have not been happy ones; Jim was the High Constable's deputy!

The little savings bank had "suspended" and what I had saved was lost or stolen and my friends who had claims against me no longer had friendship for me when I had no ready cash, so a few creditors here and there had poor Jim Gibbs after me for what I could abstract from my patients. For several years I was not financially happy by any means, and was more of a collector for Jim Gibbs than for myself. But all of these things have an ending some day, and after many years I got my end of the see-saw up and, brothers of the profession, let me tell you there is no friend so true as the dollar in your pocket—Moral: collect your bills if you wish to have friends—poor sentiment but solid fact!

THE CITY FARMER.

IT is wonderful how some men run after fads, and frequently we find that we have been chasing the *ignis fatuus*.

When a city physician, with comfortable surroundings and a few dollars ahead, concludes suddenly that he wants a farm and "a country home," and sails in to give up his hard dollars for a ramshackle, old country house and a few hundred acres of "henness-grass" land, as the natives call it, it would be a kindness to him and his family to call a commission of lunacy to sit on him and his money until he regains sanity!

Many a good man has been shipwrecked on dry land and the poorer it is the sooner he is stranded.

Again there are cranks who are never happy unless they are in hot water, and chin deep at that. It may be that I am one of that kind; but one morning I took up my paper and, while at the

breakfast table, read a nicely written advertisement of a charming country home for a city gentleman. Feeling that I was a gentleman and a resident of the city, it occurred to me that this would be a snap for me if I could just reach them before the property was taken!

My wife who usually was a very conservative and sensible woman as well as having ideas of her own, seemed interested and said:

"Let me see the paper a minute."

"That's the thing we want, sure," said I.

"Let's go to see it today," she said.

"Good enough," I replied.

And by the time it would take you to say scat, we had settled down in the railroad coach for a fifty mile ride to see this charming country place, suitable for a "city gentleman."

On the way out, we confided with each other about the many times we had thought how delightful it would be to actually own a farm and have a country place with all of the joys and charms, to which we could go with our growing family to spend restful periods and escape the dust and noise of the city.

When we disembarked, we found the usual

"A NIGH CUT THU THER PINES." [Pg. 121]

contry-store-post-office station with all of the same-everywhere-crowd of gaping rustics, flea bitten dogs, bony horses and primitive ox-carts.

They say a horse cannot think of more than one thing at a time, and it is plain to my mind that some men, and at least one woman, are similarly affected, for if we had not been stone blind when we alighted at that little station, we would have seen that we had answered an advertisement written to catch greenhorns.

After getting directions from the store-keeper, and a colored man grinding an ax under a cherry tree on the outside and a small white boy whom we met, we were pretty well unsettled as to which way we should take, as all of them referred us to a "nigh cut thu ther pines." This nigh cut was what bothered us, for after getting thoroughly lost, we came abruptly upon a negro cabin with its slab roof and surrounded by the ever present little patch of yaller corn.

Not finding anyone about home, we were entertained by two sickly looking cur dogs that barked so incessantly we could not collect our thoughts enough to decide whether to turn back or follow the path through the yard and trust to its being the

right way to the "charming country home" for which we were searching.

But we were red hot after that farm and just bullied those two dogs and went on through the darkey's yard and found "the path on tother side," and kept on until we came to a spring under a big poplar tree beside an old worm fence. The place was called "Poplar Springs," and my wife, peeping through the bushes, saw a grove of old locust trees on a hill not far distant and an old long bodied house with little dormer windows on the roof.

"What a lovely, quiet, sweet looking place it is," said she, "We are at the place I'm sure."

So I pulled the fence down and let her through and we followed the path on up to the house.

Both of us must have been in a very happy frame of mind, for everything about the place looked lovely to us, and we felt what a good thing it was to be able to get out of the city and breathe God's pure air in the country.

Before reaching the house we saw a white man and two women at work in the field, and we veered around to where they were. The man checked up his old plough horse and stopped, stumbling over the old, red clay clods of earth and awaited us with

something of a smile on his face, while the two women who had been grubbing up sassafras bushes, leaned on their hoe handles, regarding us with some degree of respect, apparently.

"Can you tell us if this is the place advertised for sale?" I asked.

"I spec it is, I have hearn they want to sell if they git ther price," said he.

"Well, could we look it over a little, with a view of purchasing it?" I said.

"Certingly,—Suckey, take the lady up to the house," said the man.

Both women were barefooted, and as my wife, with her town riggings, ambled on up to the house with her two new-found acquaintances, I never saw a more highly pleased trio as they queried and answered each other!

I walked along with the ploughman until he got to the end of his row, where he "took out," as he called unhitching his horse from the plough, and came back with him by the way of the stable.

I learned from this primitive style farmer that the people who owned the place had gotten him to stay there to care for it until they sold it for division.

This Simple Simon of a fellow impressed me as a

good fellow and told me confidentially how valuable the place was, and that it was a pity it had to be sold, but it was the only way it could be divided.

Ordinarily, I would have seen at a glance that this simple countryman was as sharp as a brier and in the employ of the parties trying to stick somebody with their old mortgaged-to death "country home."

But I wanted to have a place of my own and the long and short of it was that after considerable correspondence with the owners and some little dickering about the price, I received a letter telling me that unless I closed the deal within five days, they would sell to another party who had offered them their price, but they thought it fair to give me the refusal of it. We "closed the deal" of course, and a fool and his money were parted.

I realized that I had a country place and it occurred to me that it would not take care of itself, so with some persuasion I succeeded in hiring the man I found there to stay there and take care of it for me until we got ready to come out and care for it ourselves!

AND HE CARED FOR IT!

THE only difference between me and the man I employed as care-taker of my farm was that I paid my dollars for it and he had it for nothing, while I paid him to stay there and hold it down and do all he could to hold my pocket-book down too!

In subsequent years, since regaining my sanity, in a measure, I have never been able to see why, for a whole year, I paid an idle, vagabondish thief to take care of an old place that the devil himself wouldn't have.

Well, after much remodelling the old landmark, I had the place ready for my family to summer at and accordingly prepared to move out, and gave my care-taker notice that he could move off to make room for my family.

But by the beard of Moses he refused to move! I threatened to put him out, but he declined to get

uneasy even and actually forbade my coming on the place again.

I went back home and told my wife not to pack her trunks too soon as my hired man held the fort on the plea of being virtually an annual tenant.

My wife was terribly upset at this news and asked me what I was going to do about it.

"He's got to go," said I doggedly.

"How?"

"I don't know, but I'll move him or split a punkin. I'll have a square talk with him tomorrow and let him understand that he isn't fooling with any country bumpkin," said I.

So I took an early train and, after a two hours ride, arrived at my (or rather his) farm.

I approached him very civilly and said:

"Now, you have had time to think a little, I want you to let me know if you have made up your mind to vacate these premises or shall I be forced to eject you?"

That "eject" was a bad word for me to have used, for it fired him up in a hurry.

"Here, who de h— you thurtenin?" (threatening) said he, bristling up and making a step or two towards me.

I didn't like being out in that old place alone and raising the dander of this old moonshiner looking fellow, but kept a stiff upper lip and stepping back a pace or two, I opened my hand satchel and took out my 38 Harrington & Richardson protector and cocked it in a careless kind of fashion and replied:

"I am talking to you, you lying, old rascal and I'll give you some medicine now in about three shakes of a sheep's tail if you don't hustle off from around me."

"Now, I got you whar I want you," he said, "and I will make the drawin' of thet weepon cost you something."

He unhitched his horse and hopped on him bare-back and started off for a magistrate.

I concluded I was getting on with my delightful country home in a fair way to bring myself more happiness than I had bargained for, and concluded that while he was hunting up a magistrate, I would catch a train and go home for another talk with my wife as to what we had better do.

By some chance, I took a roundabout way through some very dense woods, and as it was sometime before the train was due, I sat down with my back against a big, old stump and rested awhile.

Presently, I noticed a man walking up a ravine about a hundred yards and observed that he went a little way to one side, turned up a flat rock and got something from under it and put it under his coat. I was so sure that my impudent care-taker was selling illicit brandy, that I determined to test him.

I returned to the house instead of keeping on to the station, and seating myself under the shade of an apple tree, I waited for him and the magistrate. Presently he came back alone and said:

"Well, you air still hangin' around, air you?"

"Yes, I'm waiting to meet a friend here," I said.

"Who's your friend?" he asked.

"He is a deputy U. S. Marshall," I said.

"Whar's he now?" asked my hired man, who seemed to be not so belligerent.

"Well, I guess he is out in those woods looking for what's under a flat rock near a big gully," said I.

He turned as white as a sheet and said:

"I aint't bin after no magistrate, can't we call this thing off?"

"Well," said I, "you move and I'll not squeal."

"I ain't got no whar to go," said he, "but I'll give you half the house untwell the fall and then I'll move."

"WHO'S YOUR FRIEND." [Pg. 128]

So I agreed to become a kind of sub-renter from my tenant and began to feel that if I did own a charming country place, I didn't own it all to myself.

My wife was not altogether satisfied with the arrangement, and in a sort of snappish way asked:

"Well, which half is ours?"

And as I was getting a little out of patience, I replied:

"Any half he'll let us have and if you can do any better than that, you had better try your hand on him."

As a parting shot she said, as I was going into my office:

"If *your* farm affects you in this way, it's a pity you got it."

"By Heavens! I got it for you!" I said, and slammed the door.

At this stage, I was far from enjoying my country home, but as I had bought it, and built on it, had hired a man on it and had rented a portion of it from him for my family, I resolved to make up with my wife and go out for the summer.

THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK.

FINALLY, about the first of June, we packed up and left town for the summer. It was the first time I had felt able to throw my practice aside and go off for a whole summer, but I had big head and felt like a man of some consequence when the paper came out announcing that Dr. B. and family had left to spend the summer at their delightful country place; and I would have stayed out there one summer if it had bankrupted me outright.

Had I confined my operations to going out there and camping, it might have all gone well; but I had the fever on me and saw how I could combine business and pleasure both. I conceived the idea of turning my place into a sanitarium, and accordingly, constructed a very comfortable building designed to accommodate eight or ten persons.

I never paused to consider that my sanitarium was about fifty miles from nowhere and that there were

other things needful in running a sanitarium besides simply the building. I had the rage for getting rid of my spare dollars and I had surely struck the right place for doing so. I allowed several of the sharp rustics to stick me by selling me "four or five gallon cows" at fancy prices, to furnish pure milk for my family and patients; and had difficulty in getting one gallon from them all!

I also constructed, at heavy expense, a very fine lake by damming up the waters of a little creek, that came near getting me in a law-suit with a darkey because I backed the water up in his place and submerged his sweet "tater" patch.

Inasmuch as this lake had cost me considerably and was a source of pleasure to the few patients who were loyal enough to patronize me, it was a question of who should be who.

That potato patch or that lake, one or the other, had to go; and there would certainly have been a law-suit or a dead negro in the near future but for the fact that a big freshet broke my dam and carried my lake away.

Feeling that the elements and my colored neighbor were both arrayed against me, I concluded to run a lakeless sanitarium. But my cares increased with

my country possessions and I waxed not rich or happy by reason of sundry unforeseen difficulties.

I found my ample acres required fencing to keep my cattle within and those of my neighbors without, and consequently, my pocket was further depleted.

Having no ready market, I had to skirmish around every day like a brigade quarter master for delicacies for my patrons as well as necessities for my long suffering family. If a few mutton chops were needed, I had to buy a whole lamb from my sharp neighbors, so that, as the boys would would say, I had to "go the whole hog or none." So it was a question with me whether I was running a sanitarium or a butcher shop!

Even under all these difficulties, I kept my composure as long as my hired help stuck to me, but as the summer advanced and the colored, big meetings started up, one by one, my treasures got to "seeking," until finally, I was forced to be not only surgeon, but wood chopper, milker and scullion.

I had a few patients who had to be cared for, whether or not, and as no amount of money could hire a darkey during the time of the big meetings which usually lasted for three or four weeks, I was suddenly confronted with the fact that instead of

enjoying my summer's outing, I had to do the milking and my wife the cooking until I could either cure the three or four patients I had, or at least get them well enough to ship to some other point.

Under all these conditions I was getting very, very sick of my country home. Each day my wife would say, "We can't stand it much longer." I somehow felt humbled, humiliated, degraded, when I got my milk bucket and slunk down behind my garden fence to try to milk my cows clandestinely. But it had to be done, and I was the man to do it.

Oh yes, I never "took water" (when I could help it, or get anything stronger!)

I could stand helping my wife out on the sly about other things, but I was particularly sore on having to do the milking. I kept it a secret as long as I could and lied about it like a coward. But finally, my overthrow was complete.

One afternoon, a very prominent gentleman from Louisville, Ky., rode up on a horse he had borrowed at the station and told me he had traveled far to consult me and that if I could get through with him, he wished to return to the station and take his train within the next hour. I felt gratified that my reputation had extended so far and was putting my

best foot foremost, knowing that if I could keep everything quiet, he would depart before discovering that I was a third-rate, country bumpkin, without sense enough to milk a cow, instead of a surgeon of reputation, when, all of a sudden, my little daughter about eight years of age, rushed on the portico where we were sitting and in great excitement cried out:

"Oh! Papa, the calf has got to the cow and Mamma says if you don't do your milking in a hurry, we won't have a drop of milk for supper!"

I couldn't lie out of it and just told my patient the plain, unvarnished truth; but I swore then and there to return to my city home, and leave my country place, sanitarium, my cows, the money I had sunk and everything else countryish behind, never more to be seen. And I did. I lost several thousand dollars trying to think I was having a good time, and might have lost many more but for that infernal calf, which proved a blessing in disguise.

UP OR DOWN?

AND now, kind reader, if I have gotten closer to your heart and made you feel that it is good for us all to have our ups and downs, our trials and sacrifices, that we may more fully appreciate the feelings of others and enjoy the many blessings that we all have, I will be glad that I have written these pages.

But have I really left you in doubt whether or not I am on the upper or lower end of the seesaw?

The man who measures his happiness by his dollars is to be pitied, for he is poor indeed, and while I cannot claim to be a mendicant at this time, my worldly goods have mostly been sunk in the costly experiment of learning to become a country gentleman!

But I cannot close this little volume without paying a loving tribute to her who has been my devoted companion, and sharer of my hardships and joys

alike, and who has been the chief factor in helping me achieve success.

"I would have left out the family," some sourling or cynic may say.

But who cares for that? Who cares for the criticism of soulless people? I am writing for my own pleasure and for that of my friends, and thank God, I number them all over our broad land. It is a pleasure to know our friends—to know them intimately; and to know a man truly, you must know him at his home. I am reaching treacherous ground, but this chapter must be closed, and at the risk of showing a soft heart I ask you to come into my little temporary paradise and let me introduce you to my own.

My footstep is already heard on the front porch and here they are coming on a run. Here they are—biggest in front, but all a coming—so glad to see me. They've outrun "Mamma" but here she is too—and if my reception is not proof that love reigns supreme in my home you do not know how to read the human heart aright.

Common self-respect may make a family appear to be affectionate, but they don't drop everything and "come a running" whenever you hit the land-

ing, unless they have the genuine thing in their hearts.

Down in the Old Dominion I know a fellow whose wife thinks he is the smartest, greatest and grandest man on earth. She has never found the charms of "society" strong enough to make her leave him alone for one evening during their whole married life. His children, some nearly large enough to commence the battle of life for themselves, romp and play with him and pull his whiskers and kiss him under his nose. They are no more afraid of him than they are of the old pet pointer dog who finds the best rug in the parlor for his evening snooze, and nobody grudges it to him. The pocket-book belongs to the family and when he wants it he asks "who had my pocket-book last?" There are no secrets to be kept from wife or children. The bank book is left in the desk drawer and any of them can imitate his miserable signature so that the paying teller can't tell "tother from which!" They open his letters and read them before he gets home, and do him just as they please.

The old fool firmly believes that he is actually rich, happy and contented.

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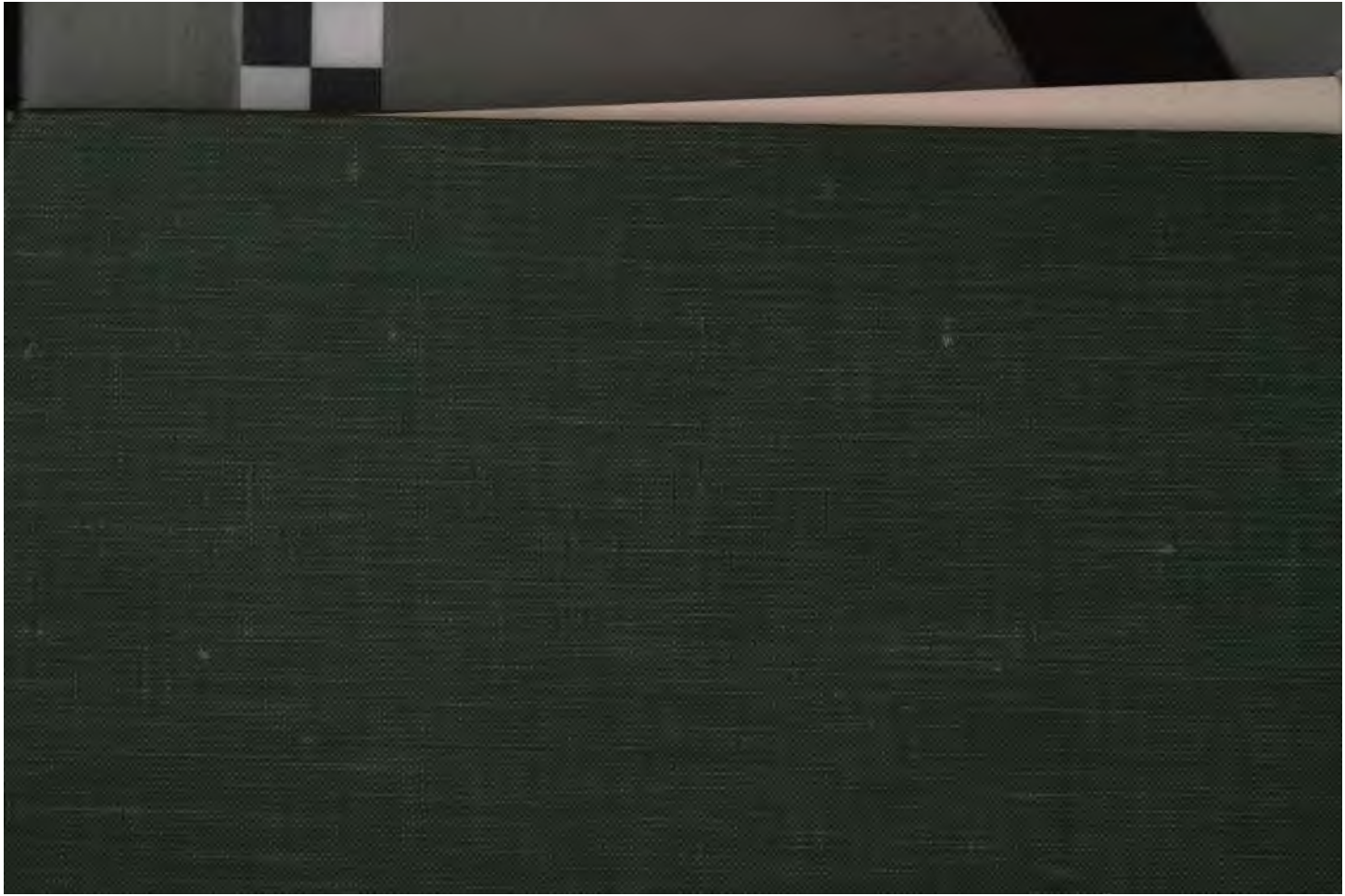
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